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## Detroit tops list of hard-to-count cities ahead of census

By COREY WILLIAMS, MIKE SCHNEIDER and ANGELIKI KASTANIS

Associated Press

**DETROIT (AP)** — When the U.S. Census Bureau starts counting people next year in Detroit, obstacles are bound to arise: The city has tens of thousands of vacant houses, sparse internet access and high poverty — factors that will make it the toughest community to tally. Other Rust Belt towns that have lost population and cities in the Sun Belt with large numbers of immigrants and transplants will pose similar challenges in the coast-to-coast headcount, an Associated Press analysis of government data found.



This Dec. 5, 2019, photo shows the Detroit skyline. An Associated Press analysis finds that Detroit tops the list of cities that will be hardest to count in the 2020 census.

Continued on Page 2

Associated Press



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# Detroit tops list of hard-to-count cities ahead of census

Continued from Front

Nationwide, about a quarter of the population lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods, including a majority of people in Atlanta, Cleveland, Dallas, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Memphis, Tennessee, and Fresno, California.

Obtaining an accurate count is critical because the census determines the allocation of \$1.5 trillion in federal spending and decides which states gain or lose congressional seats.

"There is nothing more important, no higher priority, than reaching the hard to count," Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham told lawmakers last summer.

Detroit's recent resurgence has led to refurbished downtown buildings, new boutique hotels and an invigorated arts community. But the renaissance has done little for some residents who live in persistent poverty and harbor lingering mistrust after decades of racial upheaval. The many empty homes are rel-

ics of the mass exodus that began in the 1950s and sent Detroit's population plummeting from about 1.8 million to 670,000.

About 86% of Detroit's population lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods, by far the largest proportion of any major U.S. city, the AP analysis found.

Annette Brock, who lives northeast of downtown, said some residents see no connection between answering questions from the government and improving their lives.

"Everybody else outside of us gets help before we do," Brock said. "I don't blame nobody if they don't want to participate, or if they don't want to say nothing no more. They're tired of speaking their mind."

Nationwide, the Census Bureau predicts a 60.5% response rate.

About 70% of Detroit residents turned in their 2000 Census forms. That figure fell to 64% a decade later, when the national rate was 74 percent.

In 2010, 220,000 Detroit resi-



In this Nov. 22, 2019, photo, Detroit 2020 Census Campaign executive director Victoria Kovari looks over a Detroit map showing city neighborhoods that were under-counted in the 2010 census.

Associated Press

dents were living in households that did not fill out questionnaires, costing the city \$2,000 to \$5,000 annually for every uncounted person, said Victoria Kovari, executive director of Detroit's 2020 Census Campaign.

To get those numbers back up, city census teams have knocked on nearly 130,000 doors in neighborhoods that were under-counted in the last census and spoken with more than 26,000 people. But Kovari is still concerned. For the first time, the Census Bureau would like respondents to answer questions online, but the agency estimates that 30% of Detroit households lack regular connection to the internet, roughly double the national percentage. The Census Bureau sends workers to homes that don't respond. In Detroit, that means knocking on the doors of vacant houses and others where residents may not answer.

Almost 80 percent of Detroit is African American, and observers "know we are going to have an undercount among the black population," said Diana Elliott, an Urban Institute researcher who co-wrote a report last summer that estimated anywhere from 900,000 to 4 million people could be missed.

"That puts Detroit at greater risk just because of the demographics," Elliott said. Researchers have learned that Latinos, African Americans, non-English-speaking immigrants and children under 5 are the hardest to count, along with tribal members, nontraditional families and people with informal living arrangements. Experts say the Trump administration's effort to put a citizenship question on the questionnaire may scare off immigrants who live here illegally and others. Although the effort failed, opponents of the question say damage has already been done.

California and New Mexico have some of the nation's largest concentrations of Latinos. In those states, over 40 percent of the population lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods.

By contrast, Vermont, Maine and West Virginia have some of the highest concentrations of white residents and older people, who are more likely to fill out census forms. There, less than 5% of the population lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods.

To tout the importance of the 2020 census, California is spending an estimated \$187 million on advertising and events and recruiting neighborhood leaders to

encourage participation. California census officials have hired liaisons whose sole focus is 15 specific hard-to-count groups, including farm workers, the homeless and people without broadband subscriptions.

"You really have to understand the structural barriers that exist," said Ditas Katague, director of the California Complete Count-Census 2020 Office. Gathering accurate population data in Detroit can be daunting because of its size and the emptiness of some neighborhoods. The city was almost bursting its limits through the 1950s, until good-paying auto and other manufacturing jobs allowed a burgeoning white middle class to find bigger homes and better schools in the suburbs. Years of housing discrimination made it harder for the city's black residents to leave.

Tensions between Detroit's black residents and its mostly white police department exploded in a riot in 1967, scarring the landscape and driving more white flight.

The 1973 election of Coleman A. Young as the city's first black mayor was a milestone in Detroit's rise as a city dominated by African Americans. □

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## Feds seek new ways to spot illicit opioids mailed into U.S.

By **WAYNE PARRY**

**Associated Press**

**EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, N.J. (AP)** — The federal government is enlisting the help of the private sector to develop better ways to spot and intercept illicit opioids shipped into the United States through the mail.

Several federal agencies on Thursday awarded a \$500,000 prize to a Massachusetts firm that developed an improved way to scan and analyze the contents of mail for illegal shipments of drugs such as fentanyl, much of which is shipped from China.

The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Postal Service and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy chose the winners of the Opioid Detection Challenge, a global competition that drew more than

80 entrants since its February announcement.

The goal: Develop new or better ways to find and seize illicit drug shipments at mail processing facilities without unduly slowing down global commerce. Authorities said the U.S. handles more than 480 million international parcels a year through its mail intake facilities.

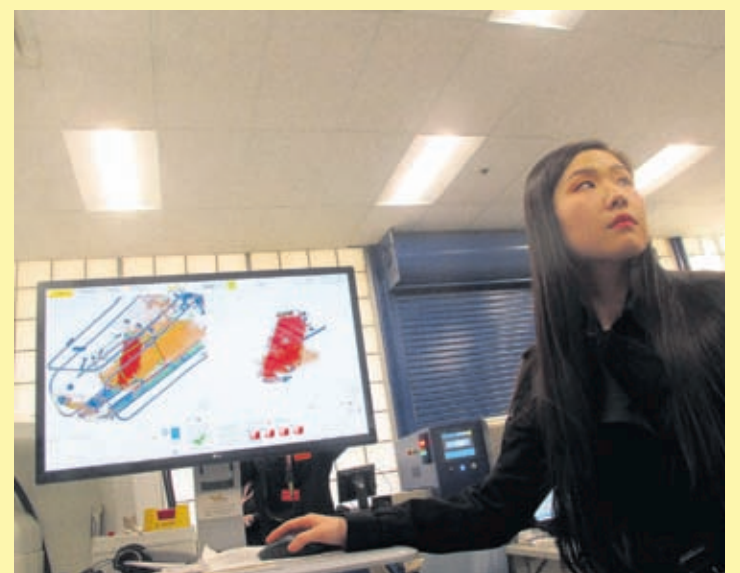
"The ability to detect these dangerous drugs truly is a national security threat," James Carroll, the White House's drug czar, said during a press conference at a federal aviation laboratory just outside Atlantic City. "The only thing that matters is saving lives. We're excited about this technology."

Integrated Defense & Security Solutions, a Boxborough, Massachusetts, company, took top honors for its technology using 3D X-ray scanning similar to

CT scans. The company added automated detection computer algorithms to existing scanning technology to better enable the detection of illegal opioids. The system identifies abnormalities in the X-ray images based on the scanned item's features and physical properties.

At the press conference, company vice president Omar Alkofahi ran a sample package of diluted fentanyl powder through a scanner, where an image on a computer screen flagged it as suspicious. In practice, the system could be used to automatically divert such suspicious packages to the side for closer inspection and possible seizure.

A runner-up winner developed technology that uses radio-frequency signals to search for specific materials, and triggers an alarm when a signal associated



In this Dec. 12, 2019 photo, Bija Chen, an engineer with a technology company that won a federal contest to find new or better ways to scan incoming mail for illegal opioid shipments, demonstrates how the computer analysis works at a demonstration in Egg Harbor Township, N.J.

**Associated Press**

with an illicit substance is detected.

Other entries used artificial intelligence and machine learning, spectrometry the study of interaction between light and matter and spectroscopy the

study of matter interacting with electromagnetic radiation; robotic noses and other sensor technologies. The federal government has not committed itself to using the technologies at its mail facilities. □



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## Tentative deal would avert possible looming federal shutdown

**ANDREW TAYLOR**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Senior lawmakers announced a tentative agreement Thursday on an almost \$1.4 trillion government-wide spending bill that would stave off a federal shutdown next weekend and split the differences on a number of contentious issues. The handshake agreement was announced by the chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., and other top members of

Congress. "There's a meeting of the minds," Lowey said. Details of the agreement were not announced and processing the sweeping measure is sure to take a few days. But it would award President Donald Trump with \$1.4 billion in additional money for the U.S.-Mexico border wall while giving the Democrats who control the House a number of their priorities such as expanded Head Start and early childhood education. The measure is likely to pass the House next week just

before the House votes on impeaching Trump. A Senate vote is expected before a temporary spending bill expires next Friday at midnight. A White House official said Trump is likely to sign the bill because it maintains his ability to pay for the wall. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal is not official. A year ago, a deadlock over the wall led Trump to spark a 35-day partial government shutdown. The eventual agreement that emerged produced a tem-



**Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., speaks during her weekly news conference on Capitol Hill, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019, in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

plate for the current pact: no "poison pill" policy provisions on topics such as abortion and the environment that could not pass muster with both Democrats and Republicans. "We decided that the decisions would be made today," said Rep. Kay Granger, R-Texas. "We said, 'It's time to get this thing done.'" At issue are 12 annual spending bill that fund the day-to-day operations of federal agencies. The appropriations package fills in the long-overdue details of this summer's budget and debt pact, which offered boosts to both the Pentagon and domestic agencies instead of the sharp across-the-board spending cuts required under a now-defunct 2011 budget agreement. Key factions supporting the sprawling package include GOP defense hawks and Democrats, who won increases for domestic programs. The probable

— and deeply unpopular — alternative would be to mostly run the government on autopilot and give back about \$100 billion in spending increases from the July budget deal. But Trump was denied \$3.6 billion to replace money tapped from popular military base projects, an outcome that might make him reluctant to repeat his controversial move to declare an national emergency to grab the military money. The drive for a spending agreement faced numerous hurdles, but it always had strong support from the top four leaders on Congress, especially House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, two veterans of the appropriations process with a long history of assembling the votes for catchall spending bills. Their relationship has soured but they are a potent force when they team up. □

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ARUBATODAY**SAVE TIME  
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By REBECCA BOONE

Associated Press

**BOISE, Idaho (AP)** — A new federal report has found the number of kids who say they have been sexually victimized in juvenile detention centers has dropped across the U.S. compared with past years. But remarkably high rates of sexual abuse persist in 12 facilities stretching from Oregon to Florida, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics report released Wednesday.

The report analyzed data collected during more than 6,000 anonymous interviews last year at nearly 330 juvenile detention facilities. Young people were asked about any forced or coerced sexual contact they experienced, whether by staffers or other kids, ranging from rape to unwanted touching to being shown sexual pictures or movies. Nationwide, an estimated 7.1% of children in juvenile facilities reported being sexually victimized during the previous 12 months, the report said. That's a drop compared with the last time the survey was done in 2012, when 9.5% of youth reported being victimized. "Today's report shows that the juvenile detention system is making long overdue strides in preventing sexual abuse," Lovisa Stannow, executive director of Just Detention International, an organization seeking to end sexual abuse in detention, said in a statement. "But even one sexual assault is too many and, as the report makes clear, this violence remains commonplace in youth facilities across the U.S."

Twelve facilities had dramatically higher rates of sexual victimization, including three juvenile residential centers in Florida, three



This May 18, 2004 file photo shows inmates sitting in one of the cottages at the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility in Circleville, Ohio.

in Texas, and one each in Oregon, Arkansas, Idaho, Georgia, Ohio and New Jersey, according to the report.

At the Liberty Juvenile Unit for Specialized Treatment in Florida, just over 26 percent of youth reported being sexually victimized in the past 12 months. Similarly high rates — about 22% and 21% — were reported at the Hastings Comprehensive Mental Health Treatment Program and Gulf Academy, both in Florida.

Florida officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

At the Juvenile Correctional Center in the small eastern Idaho town of St. Anthony, nearly 13 percent of youths reported being sexually victimized within the last 12 months. Roughly 500 miles (805 kilometers) north in a Lewiston, Idaho, juvenile correctional center, meanwhile, no incidents of sexual victimization were reported.

Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections Director Monty Prow said he was surprised to learn the St. Anthony facility had a high rate of victimization. Calling children's safety the "primary task," he said his department would dig into the data.

"If the kids don't feel safe, they won't move to the treatment aspects of what we're trying to offer," he said.

Kids at the St. Anthony facility can contact trusted adults and child protection hotlines around the clock and report abuse in other ways, Prow said. They get training at least once every three months on how to report problems if they feel unsafe.

He said Idaho also takes part in a national program called Performance-based Standards, which uses outside experts and data analysis to help officials improve conditions in juvenile detention facilities.

"Based on all the things we do, we were surprised

to see St. Anthony end up on that list," Prow said. "But we're definitely looking into it to make sure there's not something we can do better. We're always looking to do better because the kids deserve it, and we will never stop doing that." The report's findings raise concerns about states' level of oversight of each problematic facility and whether enough is being done to uncover and respond to sexual abuse, said Marsha Levick, chief legal officer for the Juvenile Law Center, a rights organization within the child welfare and justice system.

"They need to step it up, quite frankly," she said. "The fact that we see such variability across and within states of course heightens the need to ensure that we're asking every child so we really understand what the victimization looks like." Research shows that trauma inflicted on kids in residential programs like detention centers increases the risk that they will expe-

rience mental health problems, have delays in their educational progress or harm themselves or others, Levick said.

"We removed these children from their homes, we have an obligation to keep them safe," she said. "We do it because we claim we're going to treat them, provide them an opportunity for rehabilitation, but if they are victimized in those facilities, we have failed them."

The previous Bureau of Justice Statistics report included information about kids' demographics, along with the finding that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender young people were abused at a far higher rate than others.

The newest report doesn't include that data yet. The information will be analyzed and published in a future report, Bureau of Justice Statistics unit chief Erica Smith said.

Stannow of Just Detention International said the lack of demographic information is baffling. The report also didn't include information about the circumstances surrounding the abuse, which was previously included.

Smith said the report's findings are "generally a good story."

"The real takeaway is that we are seeing a reduction in the total prevalence of sexual victimization, and that is essentially across the board," she said.

It's too soon to tell if the drop is tied to a federal law that began requiring states in 2012 to meet standards designed to reduce and prevent sexual abuse behind bars, Smith said. Future reports will help determine if the Prison Rape Elimination Act is making a difference, she said. □



# Kentucky restores voting rights to nonviolent felons

By **BRUCE SCHREINER**

**Associated Press**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP)** — Professing his belief in redemption, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear signed an executive order Thursday to restore voting rights for more than 140,000 nonviolent offenders who have completed their sentences. The new Democratic governor was surrounded by voting-rights supporters in the state Capitol Rotunda as he signed the order on his third day in office, fulfilling a campaign pledge. The state's former attorney general noted his previous work to prosecute wrongdoers, but added: "I also believe in redemption, in second chances. ... My faith teaches me forgiveness."

"I believe we have a moral responsibility to protect and extend the right to vote, and to say to so many who have paid their debt that we welcome them as full members of society again," he said.

Kentucky has one of the country's highest voter disenfranchisement rates, with

nearly one in 10 Kentuckians and nearly one in four African-Americans current-

ly not allowed to vote, Beshear said. His order seeks to substantially reduce that disenfranchisement rate. Among those celebrating

was Rynn Young, who has never voted due to his drug conviction as an 18 year old in the late 1990s. The Louisville man now works as a sales representative and has twin 21-month-old daughters.

Young said in the 21 years since his conviction, he has been judged by mis-

Network, described Beshear's action as a "crucial day for democracy in our commonwealth." His group will work on the follow-up phase — getting the affected people registered to vote. The order applies to nonviolent felons who completed their sentences, including probation or parole, Beshear said. It also grants voting rights to those who have served their sentences but still owe fees or fines — a factor that some states have used to deny voting rights. The action does not relieve them of obligations to pay court-ordered restitution or fines.

"You can still owe money and you have your voting rights restored today," Beshear told reporters. "There are other ways to make sure that that money is paid. We don't want to hold back voting rights just because someone doesn't have the same bank account as somebody else."

The next step in carrying out the order is to provide the necessary verification information to the state's election officials who register voters, the governor said.

"Our job is to make that seamless," he said. "To make sure that anyone can walk into any of the election officials' offices and be able to register right then, right there. Now that's going to take a little bit of time, and we ask people to bear with us."

The process will be completed long before the next election, he said.

Crimes excluded from the executive order include treason, election bribery and violence offenses — including all rapes and sexual abuse, homicide, fetal homicide and first- and second-degree assault, according to Beshear's office.

Beshear said he supports making his executive order permanent by adding its provisions to the state Constitution. Such a measure would have to win approval from lawmakers and Kentucky voters. □



Kentucky Democratic Governor Andy Beshear signs an executive order to reinstate the voting rights of over 100,000 non-violent felons who have completed their sentences, at the Capitol in Frankfort, Ky., Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

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takes he made as a teenager. "Today, a day that I thought I'd never see ... Gov. Beshear gave me back my equality as an American."

"I just appreciate the opportunity for a second chance, just to be heard," he said.

Amanda Bourland also lost her right to vote due to drug and other offenses as an 18 year old. Now in her mid-40s, the Louisville woman has four sons, works and is pursuing a master's degree. She said she has anguished over her inability to vote.

"I have tried and tried to be heard at the polls and I have been told 'no,'" she said. "I was told 13 years ago that if I kept doing the next right thing, the next right thing would happen." She then told Beshear: "Thank you so much for making the next right thing happen, because now my voice matters."

She promised not to take voting for granted, saying: "Every election, I will be there."

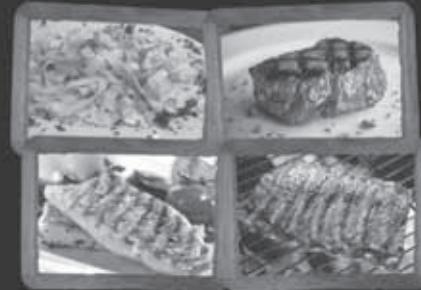
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## Mother tells judge her daughter on life support is 'sassy'

By JAMIE STENGLE  
Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) —

The mother of a 10-month-old girl on life support testified Thursday that her daughter is "sassy" and enjoys cartoons, as a Texas judge considered whether a Fort Worth hospital can remove life-sustaining treatment because doctors say the infant is in pain and her condition will never improve.

The family of Tinslee Lewis is asking an appellate judge to issue an injunction to ensure the Cook Children's Medical Center doesn't take her off life support.

Doctors at the Fort Worth hospital had planned to remove Tinslee from life support Nov. 10 after invoking Texas' "10-day rule," which can be employed when a family disagrees with doctors who say life-sustaining treatment should be stopped. The law stipulates that if the hospital's ethics committee agrees with doctors, treatment can be withdrawn after 10 days if a new provider can't be found to take the patient. Hospital officials said they've reached out to more than 20 facilities to see if one would take Tinslee, but all agreed that further care is futile.

Tinslee has never left Cook Children's since her premature birth. The hospital said she has a rare heart defect and suffers from chronic lung disease and severe chronic high blood pressure. She hasn't come off a ventilator since going into respiratory arrest in early July and requires full respi-

ratory and cardiac support, deep sedation and to be medically paralyzed.

Lewis said, about removing her daughter from life support.

clinical options, and that treatment was no longer benefiting Tinslee. The girl is

"We care a lot about Tinslee," Duncan said. "We care a lot about her family."

Tarrant County Juvenile Court Judge Alex Kim issued a temporary restraining order to stop the removal of life support on Nov. 10. But Kim was removed from the case last week after the hospital filed a motion questioning his impartiality and saying he had bypassed case-assignment rules to designate himself as the presiding judge.

After his removal, Judge Sandee Bryan Marion of Texas' Fourth Court of Appeals was assigned to hear the request for an injunction. It is unclear if Marion will issue a ruling on Thursday.

Cook Children's said hospital officials have been talking to Tinslee's family for months about concerns for her long-term survival. By August, the hospital said, everyone on the girl's care team agreed that further care was futile and by September they had begun talking to the family about withdrawing life support. With the doctors and her family still unable to resolve their differences, the ethics committee met Oct. 30 and unanimously decided further treatment was inappropriate.

Texas Right to Life, an anti-abortion group that opposes the "10-day rule," has been representing Tinslee's family. Spokeswoman Kimberlyn Schwartz said her group has also reached out to facilities and that they hope one will be found that can take Tinslee in. □



This undated photo provided by Texas Right to Life shows Tinslee Lewis.

Associated Press

The hospital said doctors believe she's suffering.

But Trinity Lewis, Tinslee's mother, testified Thursday that despite her daughter's sedation, she has a sense of the girl's likes and dislikes, describing her as "sassy." Tinslee enjoys the animated musical "Trolls" and cries when it ends, the mother said. Tinslee doesn't like to have her hair brushed, Lewis said.

"I want to be the one to make the decision for her,"

Dr. Jay Duncan, one of Tinslee's physicians, described the girl's complex conditions and Cook Children's efforts to treat her, which have included about seven surgeries. The cardiac intensive care doctor said that for the first five months of Tinslee's life doctors had hope she might one day at least be able to go home. But Duncan said there came a point when doctors determined they had run out of surgical and

not likely to survive six more months, and the hospital has made "extraordinary" efforts to find another facility for her, Duncan said.

"She is in pain. Changing a diaper causes pain. Suctioning her breathing tube causes pain. Being on the ventilator causes pain," he said.

Duncan said there had been "many, many" conversations with Tinslee's family about her dire condition.



# UK exit poll suggests majority for Johnson's Conservatives

By **DANICA KIRKA**  
**MIKE CORDER**  
**JILL LAWLESS**  
Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — An exit poll in Britain's election projected Thursday that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party would likely win a solid majority of seats in Parliament, a decisive outcome that should allow Johnson to fulfill his plan to take the U.K. out of the European Union next month.

The survey, released just after polls closed, predicted the Conservatives would get 368 of the 650 House of Commons seats and the Labour Party 191. That would be the biggest Tory majority for several decades, and a major setback for Labour.

Based on interviews with voters leaving 144 polling stations across the country, the poll is conducted for a consortium of U.K. broadcasters and is regarded as a reliable, though not exact, indicator of the likely result. The poll also projects 55 seats for the Scottish National Party and 13 for the



The results of an exit poll are projected onto the outside of Broadcasting House in London, just after voting closed for the 2019 General Election, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

Liberal Democrats. Ballots are being counted, with official results expected early Friday. A decisive Conservative win would vindicate Johnson's decision to press for Thursday's early election, which was held nearly two

years ahead of schedule. He said that if the Conservatives won a majority, he would get Parliament to ratify his Brexit divorce deal and take the U.K. out of the EU by the current Jan. 31 deadline.

That would fulfill the decision of British voters in 2016 to leave the EU, three and a half years after the divisive referendum result. It would start a new phase of negotiations on future relations between Britain and the 27 remaining EU members.

Johnson did not mention the exit poll as he thanked voters in a tweet. "Thank you to everyone across our great country who voted, who volunteered, who stood as candidate," he said. "We live in the greatest democracy in the world."

Conservative Party chairman James Cleverly said he was cautious about the poll, but that if substantiated it would give the party "a big majority" that could be used to "get Brexit done."

The pound surged on the exit poll's forecast, jumping over two cents against the dollar, to \$1.3445, the highest in more than a year and a half. Many investors hope a Conservative win would speed up the Brexit pro-

cess and ease, at least in the short term, some of the uncertainty that has corroded business confidence since the 2016 vote.

A Labour drubbing would raise questions over the future of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who will have led his left-of-center party to two electoral defeats since 2017.

"Certainty this exit poll is a devastating blow," said Labour trade spokesman Barry Gardiner. "It's a deeply depressing result."

Many voters casting ballots on Thursday hoped the election might finally find a way out of the Brexit stalemate in this deeply divided nation. Opinion polls had given the Conservatives a steady lead, but the result was considered hard to predict, because the issue of Brexit cuts across traditional party loyalties.

Three and a half years after the U.K. voted by 52%-48% to leave the EU, Britons remain split over whether to leave the 28-nation bloc, and lawmakers have proved incapable of agreeing on departure terms.

Johnson pushed for the early election — Britain's first December vote since 1923 — to try to break the political logjam. He campaigned relentlessly on

a promise to "Get Brexit done" by getting Parliament to ratify his "oven-ready" divorce deal with the EU and take Britain out of the bloc as scheduled on Jan. 31.

The Conservatives focused much of their energy on trying to win in a "red wall" of working-class towns in central and northern England that have elected Labour lawmakers for decades but also voted strongly in 2016 to leave the EU. That effort got a boost when the Brexit Party led by Nigel Farage decided at the last minute not to contest 317 Conservative-held seats to avoid splitting the pro-Brexit vote. Labour, which is largely but ambiguously pro-EU, faced competition for anti-Brexit voters from the centrist Liberal Democrats, Scottish and Welsh nationalist parties, and the Greens.

On Brexit, the opposition party said it would negotiate a new divorce deal with the EU and then offer voters the choice of leaving the 28-nation bloc on those terms or remaining.

But on the whole Labour tried to focus the campaign away from Brexit and onto its radical domestic agenda, vowing to tax the rich, nationalize industries such as railroads and water companies and give everyone in the country free internet access. It campaigned heavily on the future of the National Health Service, a deeply respected institution that has struggled to meet rising demand after nine years of austerity under Conservative-led governments.

One of the campaign's defining images was a photo of a sick 4-year-old boy sleeping on a hospital floor because no beds were available. Johnson's initial failure to even look at the photo in an on-camera interview put him on the defensive, portraying him as being insensitive to the child's plight. The photo swept across social media like a firestorm, injecting an explosive jolt into the political war of information in the final days of the campaign. □

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# UN chief warns against 'survival of the richest' on climate

By FRANK JORDANS  
ARITZ PARRA  
Associated Press

**MADRID (AP)** — United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres warned Thursday that failure to tackle climate change could result in economic disaster that would allow only the "survival of the richest." Guterres urged officials from almost 200 countries at the annual U.N. climate meeting in Madrid to embrace the economic opportunities that come with cutting greenhouse gases rather than focus on the risks to existing industries dependent on fossil fuels.

"For too long, vested interests have peddled the false story that economic growth and tackling climate change are incompatible," the U.N. chief said. "This is nonsense."

"In fact, failing to tackle global heating is a sure-fire recipe for economic disaster," Guterres added.

He cited a study showing that shifting to a low-carbon economy could create 65 million new jobs worldwide by 2030 and boost growth by \$26 trillion dollars. Scientists say countries need to stop burning fossil fuels by 2050 at the latest to ensure global temperatures don't rise more than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) this century.

"This transition needs to be done to benefit everybody," Guterres said. "And not doing this transition will only allow, as I said, the survival of the richest."

His remarks came as negotiations in Madrid neared the official end, with disagreements over key issues still unresolved.

Vulnerable countries expressed outrage over Australia's bid to hold onto piles of emissions vouchers left over from a now-discredited system that could allow it to meet its climate commitments without reducing pollution.

Asked about Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison's recent assertion that his country was part of the "Pacific family," the economy minister of Fiji responded that "when you have fam-



Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations delivers a speech during a Global Climate Plenary event at the COP25 climate talks congress in Madrid, Spain, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

negotiators have expressed concern that loopholes in a deal about international carbon markets could allow some countries to claim emissions reductions on paper that haven't actually been made.

"In that sense, from a European perspective, we are absolutely clear that: better no deal than a bad deal," said Eickhout.

The summit's president, Chile's Environment Minister Carolina Schmidt, urged delegates to find "no excuses for not reaching agreements" and added that the world's "youth and women" were demanding action, "one that is equal to the historical challenge that we are facing." □

ily members you also have some black sheep members too in the family."

"At the moment, it would seem that they appear to be far from eating at the same table," Aiyaz Sayed Khaiyum told reporters in Madrid, adding that he hoped Australia would "let go of their current position." Small, low-lying islands like Fiji are particularly vulnerable to tropical storms and sea-level rise worsened by climate change.

Simon Stiell, environment minister of the Caribbean island of Grenada, warned that some countries at the U.N. meeting "are losing sight of the bigger picture as if there is no climate emergency."

"This inaction is costing the lives of our people and impacting the lives and the livelihoods of millions around the world," Stiell said.

"We need to stop talking. We know what must be done."

Talks to agree rules for global carbon markets and aid for poor countries already affected by climate change have made little progress in recent days.

Bas Eickhout, an influential Green Party lawmaker in the European Parliament, said maintaining the "integrity" of the 2015 Paris climate accord was a priority for the 28-nation bloc. Some



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# Israelis gird for unprecedented third election in a year

By TIA GOLDENBERG

Associated Press

**JERUSALEM (AP)** — Israelis grappled Thursday with the confounding reality of unprecedented third national elections in less than a year, after Parliament was dissolved and the date for the next vote was set — further extending months of political paralysis that has gripped the country. Legislators passed a motion earlier to hold elections on March 2, hours after the deadline to form a coalition government expired. The motion passed with a 94-0 vote in the house.

That now triggers a nearly three-month-long campaign ahead of the vote that most polls predict will not produce dramatically different results that led to the current logjam.

"This nightmare, in which we're heading into elections once again, the third within the space of a single year, is neither a parable nor a dream. It is completely real," wrote Sima Kadmon in the leading Yediot Achronot daily. "There aren't words left that can express the public's disgust with and mistrust towards its elected representatives. As in each previous round, the largest parties, Likud and Blue and White,



Supporters of the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rally outside Israel's parliament in Jerusalem, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

blamed each other for the impasse and tried setting the narrative for what is likely to be a grueling and caustic campaign.

"The politicians were unable to decide and so it goes back to the people. And it's a shame. There weren't big differences," Foreign Minister Israel Katz, a Likud lawmaker, told Israeli Army Radio.

Israel has been mired in political deadlock for months, after two inconclusive elections and failed attempts by both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his chief

rival, former army chief Benny Gantz, to cobble together coalition governments. The costly election campaigns, government work on indefinite hold and the perceived obstinacy of both sides has frustrated Israelis, who are used to fractious politics but have never seen repeat elections.

"It's very disappointing. Terrible, in my opinion. It's also a waste of resources and energy. The public is tired of it and I think there's anger at all sides that can't reach any kind of agreement," said Malka Miller,

walking along Tel Aviv's beach-side boardwalk.

During government negotiations, both sides professed eagerness to reach a power-sharing agreement, but could not agree on its composition nor who would lead it. Netanyahu insisted on serving as prime minister, where he is best positioned to fight his recent indictment on a series of corruption charges. Gantz has refused to serve under a prime minister with such serious legal problems and called on Likud to choose a different leader. Likud has seen a burgeon-

ing insurrection by lawmaker Gideon Saar, who says the party needs a new leader because Netanyahu has been unable to form a government. Primaries are set for later this month, but fewer than a handful of Likud legislators have fallen behind Saar and Netanyahu is expected to be returned to party leadership, despite the political disarray and his legal woes. Netanyahu faces charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three corruption cases in which he is accused of trading legislative or regulatory favors in exchange for lavish gifts or favorable media coverage. Netanyahu denies wrongdoing. Netanyahu had hoped for a sweeping victory in April's elections, winning him a majority that would grant him immunity from prosecution. He can now hope that the next election delivers him a more favorable result. Netanyahu's trial is on hold until the immunity issue is resolved, a process that is expected to take months. After the March election, he also could use coalition negotiations as leverage to push potential partners to support his immunity request. □

## Baghdad mob kills teen gunman and strings up his corpse

SAMYA KULLAB  
MURTADA FARAJ

Associated Press

**BAGHDAD (AP)** — An angry mob killed a 16-year-old and strung up the corpse by its feet from a traffic pole after the teen shot and killed six people Thursday, including four anti-government protesters, Iraqi officials said.

Dozens of people pointed their cellphones at the body dangling high above them in a central Baghdad square. Videos circulating on social media showed the young man being beaten and dragged across the street. The violence underscored the growing fears and suspicions swirling around the



Posters of Anti-government protesters who have been killed in demonstrations are displayed in Tahrir Square during ongoing protests in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

8-week-old protest movement, which engulfed Iraq on Oct. 1 when thousands

took to the streets to decry government corruption, poor services and scarcity

of jobs. A string of mysterious acts of bloodshed by unknown groups has put anti-government protesters on edge and eroded their faith in the ability of state security forces to protect them.

Last Friday, 25 protesters were killed when gunmen in pickup trucks opened fire in Baghdad's Khilani Square.

That same week, mysterious knife attacks targeted over a dozen anti-government protesters in Tahrir Square, the hub of the protest movement.

In recent days, abductions and assassinations of high-profile civil activists have stoked paranoia among demonstrators.

Protesters largely blame Iran-backed militias for the attacks and see the violence as a campaign to instill fear and weaken their peaceful movement. Thursday's bloodshed began when the young gunman opened fire in Baghdad's Wathba Square, killing two shop owners and four protesters.

Security officials said the teen was wanted by police on drug-related charges and was running from security forces at the time.

An enraged mob beat the young man to death, security and health officials said. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. □





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## North Korea berates US for criticizing its missile tests

By KIM TONG-HYUNG

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

North Korea accused the United States of “hostile provocation” on Thursday for criticizing its ballistic missile tests during a United Nations Security Council meeting and warned that the Trump administration may have blown its chance to salvage nuclear negotiations.

An unnamed Foreign Ministry spokesman said the “foolish” U.S. comments helped North Korea reach a “definite decision” about its next steps as it approaches an end-of-year deadline set by leader Kim Jong Un for Washington to offer mutually acceptable terms to revive the nuclear talks. The North did not specify what those steps were. At a Security Council meeting on Wednesday, U.S. Ambassador Kelly Craft said North Korea’s “deeply counterproductive” ballistic missile tests risk closing the door on prospects for negotiating peace but said the Trump administration is “prepared



In this Oct. 2, 2019, file photo, people watch a TV showing a file image of an unspecified North Korea’s missile launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea. Associated Press

to be flexible” and take concrete, parallel steps toward an agreement on resuming talks.

“The U.S. talks about dialogue, whenever it opens its mouth, but it is too natural that the U.S. has nothing to present before us though dialogue may open,” the spokesman said in a state-

ment released through North Korean state media. He said North Korea’s tests are aimed at improving its self-defense and pointed out that the United States tests ICBMs freely. U.S. criticism of the North Korean tests demonstrate a “bandit-like” intent to disarm the North completely, he said.

“U.S. did a foolish thing which will boomerang on it, and decisively helped us make a definite decision on what way to choose,” the statement said. Negotiations faltered after the United States rejected North Korean demands for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a partial

surrender of the North’s nuclear capabilities at Kim’s second summit with U.S. President Donald Trump in Vietnam in February.

Trump and Kim met for a third time in June at the border between North and South Korea and agreed to resume talks. But an October working-level meeting in Sweden broke down over what the North Koreans described as the Americans’ “old stance and attitude.” Kim, who unilaterally suspended nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests last year while initiating diplomacy with Washington and Seoul, has said North Korea could seek a “new path” if the United States persists with sanctions and pressure against the North. North Korea has conducted 13 rounds of ballistic missile and rocket artillery tests since May to pressure Washington, and has hinted at lifting its moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests if the Trump administration fails to make substantial concessions before the new year. □

## Fire on Russia’s only aircraft carrier kills 1, injures 11

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) —

Russia’s only aircraft carrier suffered a massive fire Thursday that killed one crew member, injured another 11 people and significantly damaged the ill-fated ship that has been haunted by incidents throughout its service.

The fire on the Admiral Kuznetsov broke out during welding work at a shipyard in the Arctic port of Murmansk and spread quickly through the carrier’s internal compartments. The ship’s crew

and emergency teams spent the day battling the blaze.

The military said one crew member died while battling the fire, and another one is missing.

Authorities in Murmansk said 11 people were injured and 10 of them were hospitalized in intensive care units.

The Investigative Committee, the nation’s top state investigative agency, has opened a probe into a possible violation of safety rules.

Russian state television

showed the carrier berthside next to a snow-covered hill, engulfed by smoke.

The Defense Ministry said the fire was localized.

The Admiral Kuznetsov has been plagued by breakdowns and setbacks since its launch in 1985. The massive blaze follows a 70-ton crane crashing onto the Admiral Kuznetsov’s deck in October 2018 when a mammoth floating dock holding the ship sank.

The crane left a hole of 20 square meters (215 square feet), and the loss of the



In this 2004 file photo the Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier seen in the Barents Sea, Russia.

Associated Press

dock significantly slowed down repairs on the carrier since the navy lacked an-

other of comparable size. □



# Protests subside, but economic aftershocks rattle Haitians

By **EVENS SANON**  
**DANICA COTO**  
Associated Press

**Port-au-Prince (AP)** — The flaming barricades are mostly gone, protesters have largely dissipated and traffic is once again clogging the streets of Haiti's capital, but hundreds of thousands of people are now suffering deep economic aftershocks after more than two months of demonstrations.

The protests that drew tens of thousands of people at a time to demand the resignation of President Jovenel Moïse also squeezed incomes, shuttered businesses and disrupted the transportation of basic goods.

"We are nearing a total crash," Haitian economist Camille Chalmers said. "The situation is unsustainable." Haiti's economy was already fragile when the new round of protests began in mid-September, organized by opposition leaders and supporters angry over corruption, spiraling inflation and dwindling supplies, including fuel. More than 40 people were killed and dozens injured as protesters clashed



In this Dec. 4, 2019 photo, street vendors sell their produce in Petion-Ville, Haiti.

Associated Press

with police. Moïse insisted he would not resign and called for dialogue. The United Nations World Food Program says a recent survey found that one in three Haitians, or 3.7 million people, need urgent food assistance and 1 million are experiencing severe hunger. The WFP, which says it is trying to get emergency food assistance to 700,000 people,

blames rising prices, the weakening local currency, and a drop in agricultural production due partly to the disruption of recent protests. In the last two years, Haiti's currency, the gourde, declined 60% against the dollar and inflation recently reached 20%, Chalmers said. The rising cost of food is especially crucial in the country of nearly 11 million

people. Some 60% make less than \$2 a day and 25% earn less than \$1 a day. A 50-kilogram (110-pound) bag of rice has more than doubled in price in the local currency, said Marcelin Saingiles, a store owner who sells everything from cold drinks to cookies to used tools in Port-au-Prince. The 39-year-old father of three children said he now struggles to buy milk and

vegetables. "I feed the kids, but they're not eating the way they're supposed to," he said, adding that he has drained the funds set aside for his children's schooling to buy food.

A growing number of families across Haiti can't even afford to do that since the protests began, with barricades preventing the flow of goods between the capital and the rest of the country.

Many of those live in Haiti's rural areas, which also have been hardest hit by demonstrations that continue in some cities and towns. Wadlande Pierre, 23, said she temporarily moved in with her aunt in the southwest town of Les Cayes to escape the violent protests in Port-au-Prince.

However, she had to move back to the capital because there was not gas, power or water in Les Cayes, and food was becoming scarce.

"There is no access to basic items that you need," she said. Pierre is now helping her mother, Vanlancia Julien, sell fruits and vegetables on a sidewalk in the neighborhood of Delmas in the capital. □

## Chile: Plane that vanished en route to Antarctica found

Associated Press

**SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)** — Chilean officials said Thursday that searchers have located the military transport plane that disappeared en route to Antarctica. Defense Minister Alberto Espina also said at a news conference that they have found human remains from some of the 38 passengers who were aboard when the plane took off from southernmost Chile.

Officials said they believe that all those aboard the plane are dead, adding that it was nearly impossible to expect any survivors to be found.

The C-130 Hercules departed Monday afternoon from a base in far-southern Chile on a regular maintenance flight for



Chile's Defense Minister Alberto Espina speaks during a news conference at the Chilean Air Force base in Punta Arenas, Chile, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

an Antarctic base. Radio contact was lost 70 minutes later. After midnight, the Air Force declared the plane a loss, but it wasn't until Wednesday that a plane scanning the seas first spotted floating debris believed to be from the plane.

"Remains of human beings that are most likely the passengers have been found among several pieces of the plane," said Air Force Gen. Arturo Merino. "I feel immense pain for this loss of lives."

Just three of the passengers were civilians, including Ignacio Parada, 24, who was in his last year of studies at the University of Magallanes and was headed to study drinking water systems at the military base. □



# LOCAL



## Community Footprints gives back to the people

**PALM BEACH —** The Ritz-Carlton Community Footprints program, organized different activities to support their social responsibility towards our community. The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is happy to be part of the food drive in which 68 food baskets were donated to 'Fundacion Pa Nos Comunidad', freely translated 'foundation for our community'.

All Ritz-Carlton employees participated by buying the products and preparing the baskets. They also placed a message in all the baskets for the persons who will receive them.

December 5th was International Volunteers Day and on this day the giving 'Ladies & Gentlemen of The Ritz-Carlton' -as the staff is called- under the flag of the Community Footprints volunteered at different activities. They visited a total of five different elementary schools with 40 boxes filled with gifts for the children. They also visited YMCA San Nicolas to celebrate the traditional Sinterklaas feast with the children. The children received a gift and also enjoyed a nice dinner during the event.

Jouraine Vrolijk, representative of The Ritz-Carlton Community Footprints, is happy with the outcome of 2019. It was a successful year with a total of 95 activities held and more than 5,300 hours of volunteer work given back to the community by the giving Ladies and Gentlemen of The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba. □



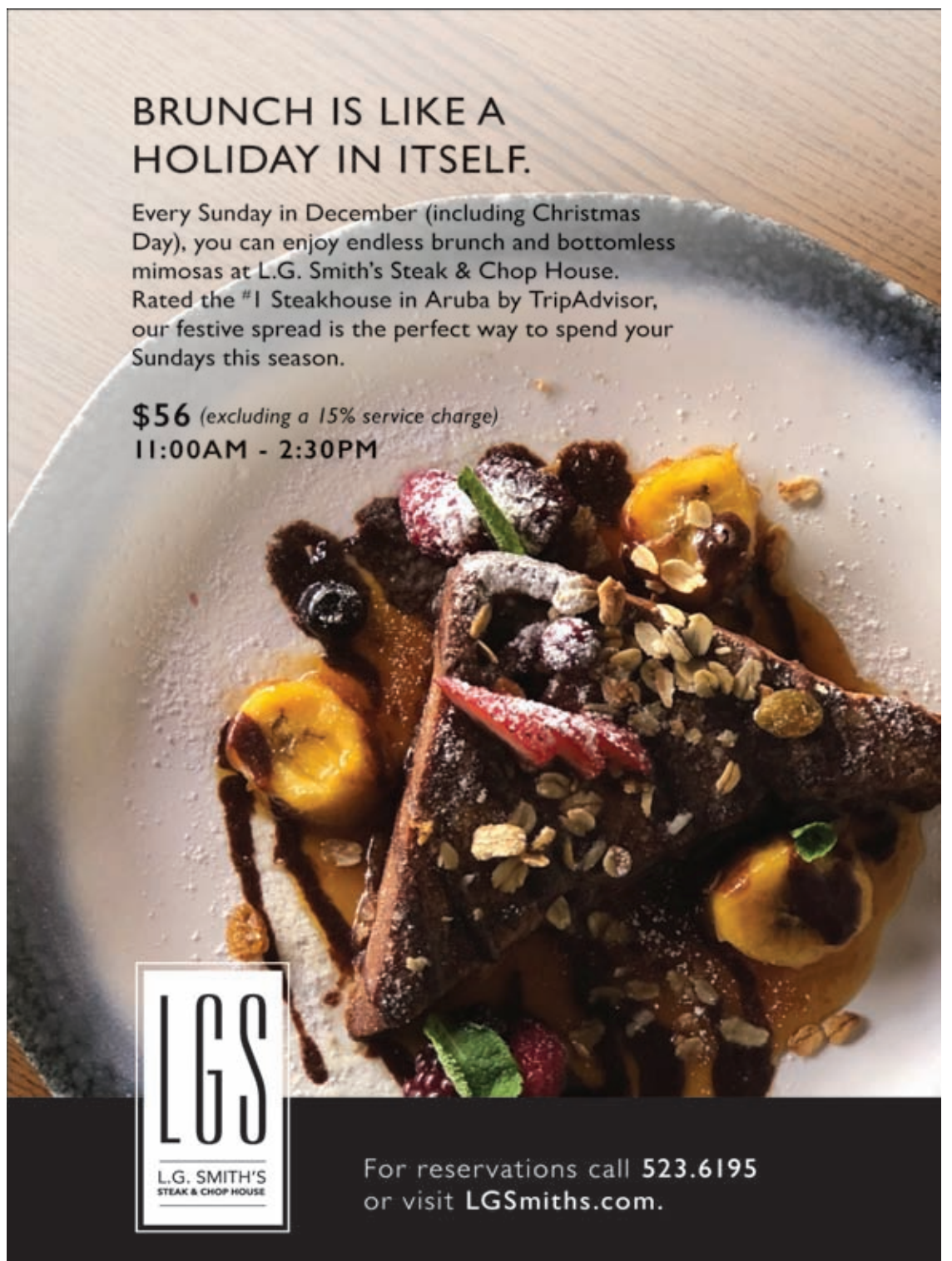
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## Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance concludes working visit to the Netherlands

ORANJESTAD — Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) Chair Hellen van der Wal and Interim Director Tadzio Bervoets recently concluded a working visit to the Netherlands. The primary goal of the visit was to engage and discuss the way forward for the organization and to lobby for increased support for the Nature Conservation Organizations which form DCNA. The Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) is a nonprofit organization created to protect the natural environment and to promote sustainable management of natural resources on the six Dutch Caribbean islands.



The pristine nature of the Dutch Caribbean contains the richest biodiversity in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The diverse ecosystems are a magnet for tourism and the most important source of income for residents of the islands. Nature on the islands is unique and important but it is also fragile. The lack of sustainable funding, policy support and adequate spatial planning poses the most significant threats to the sustainable development of the islands.

Discussions were held with Member of European Parliament Samira Rafaela (D66), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Netherlands, Bird Protection Netherlands, the Worldwide Fund for Nature the Netherlands, and representatives from the VU University Amsterdam. Discussions were also held with the Dutch Postcode Lottery, a critical supporter of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance.

Considering that the response to conservation issues in a global environmental crisis and due to the effects of climate change it was emphasized that the park management organizations on all islands of the Dutch Caribbean are at the forefront of this global crises. This will have extra and significant impacts in terms of the biodiversity within the kingdom. However, despite the Caribbean be-

ing at the forefront of this crises, parks are structurally under-supported in terms of funding and capacity. The ensuring of ambitious Dutch policies for Nature and Biodiversity should be extended into the Caribbean Parts of the Kingdom, especially considering the islands' role as biodiversity hotspots. Taking the above into consideration there is an increased need to put the focus on and communicate the conservation challenges faced by the Dutch Caribbean to policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic, in particular in The Hague and in Brussels.

The protection and functioning of nature (ecosystems) in multifunctional and multi-use landscapes is critical in terms of how vulnerable and interconnected Caribbean ecosystems are. As small islands whatever happens on terrestrial habitat affects marine habitat. This interconnectivity should be stressed, as should the fact that this is much more evident and much more of an existential threat for small island ecosystems than for those on the continent.

The Aruban National Park Foundation FPNA, STINAPA Bonaire, CARMABI Curaçao, STENEPA St. Eustatius, the Saba Conservation Foundation and the Sint Maarten Nature Foundation comprises the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance. □

### Travel Tips



1. When checking-in, you will always need your valid passport, along with your ticket, e-ticket receipt or e-ticket confirmation. For some countries a Visa is also required.
2. For all US-bound departures, check-in three hours before your scheduled departure time.
3. For all US-bound flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the left side of building; follow the signs and head towards local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates. Aruba Airport provides full US Pre-Clearance service.
4. For all Non US departures, check-in may vary between airlines and destinations; always consult your airline for more information. Being at the airport 3 hours before your departure flight is always safe.
5. For all Non US flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the right side of building; follow the signs and head towards Local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates.
6. If traveling with a carry-on, there are restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols you can carry in your carry-on luggage. Always check with your airline on limitations.
7. Always check the weight limit of your baggage; excess weight may result in penalty fees.
8. Always label your bags and suitcases with your name, address and phone number.
9. Always leave all carry-on items unlocked while passing through screening points to not cause delays if these need to be inspected.
10. Avoid wearing big belt buckles, clothing with metal buttons, lots of jewelry etc. when traveling. If you have these on, remove all metal items and place these in a tray for screening. It is advisable to put all metal items in your carry-on luggage until you clear security. This will help speed up the process.
11. Remove shoes at checkpoint and place in tray for x-ray machine screening.
12. All electronic items should be placed in tray outside their case for x-ray screening.
13. Avoid packing foods and beverages in your check-in baggage. When traveling to the US, you have to comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More information <https://www.usda.gov/>.
14. If traveling with medication, please pack these in your carry-on luggage in their original packaging.
15. If you medical documentation, present this to the security checkpoint screener to inform them. The documentation is not required and will not exempt you from the screening process.
16. Take note of inadmissible items such as sharp objects, sporting goods, guns and firearms, martial arts and self-defense items, tools, explosive materials, flammable items, disabling chemicals and other items when traveling. More information available on [www.airportaruba.com](http://www.airportaruba.com).





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## Aruba to Me

ORANJESTAD – Aruba Today likes to welcome readers to participate in our newspaper. You can see that in our Honored Guest-publications, specials like on Valentine's Day and on other occasions. Throughout the year you are always welcome to send us your vacation picture(s) together with completing the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... (Email: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com))

For today's newspaper we received a great picture from **Nancy Fletch** from Buffalo New York. She wrote:

**Aruba to us is....  
Love and Romance!**

Tom and Betsy Lyons celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary and Chuck and Nancy Fletch their 10th. Both couples decided to renew their vows on their favorite island. They have been coming to Aruba for many years and couldn't think of a better place to renew their vows. The ceremony took place at the Costa Linda Beach Resort.

Both couples enjoy their morning coffee while reading the Aruba Today.

Aruba Today wishes Tom & Betsy and Chuck & Nancy many more years together filled with Love and Happiness! ☐







## Christmas lights in Aruba



**ORANJESTAD** — Christmas in Aruba would not be complete without a visit to see the Christmas Lights around the island. By just driving around on the main roads you can enjoy a variety of creativity with colorful lights being displayed on various Aruban homes. Also the majority of the roundabouts are decorated.

used for the membrane of the furro instrument (kind of tambura with stick).

Other instruments used in gaita include maracas, cutatro, charrasca and tambora (Venezuelan drum). Song themes range from humorous and love songs to protest songs. The local gaita bands are composed mostly of a group of ladies who sing with angelic voices while they dance in a choreographic manner.

If you are lucky enough you might hear Christmas carols and "gaitas" at any of these locations but also at the malls and stores. Gaita is a style of Venezuelan folk music from Maracaibo in Zulia State. It is possibly derived from gaits, the Gothic word for goat, the animal whose skin generally is

The map shown here will give you an overview of the most popular decorated places around the island. So hop into your car or call a taxi driver to go around and enjoy the spectacular Christmas scenes. □

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## Aruba to Me

ORANJESTAD – Aruba Today likes to welcome readers to participate in our newspaper. You can see that in our Honored Guest-publications, specials like on Valentine’s Day and on other occasions. Throughout the year you are always welcome to send us your vacation picture(s) together with completing the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... (Email: news@arubatoday.com)

For today’s newspaper we received a great picture from **Wilbur Arnold** dedicated to his friend Keith. He wrote:

### Aruba to me is.... Perfect place to spend your 60th birthday!

Keith and Shirley Susany have been visiting Aruba since 2005 and this is their 26th visit. They enjoy everything about the island but favorites include the Bugaloe Beach Bar, dinner at Daniels and sailing on the Palm Pleasure.

This visit is a special occasion because Keith is celebrating his 60th birthday.

As you can see from the picture, Keith is thrilled to spend his 60th birthday in Aruba rather than home in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

Happy Birthday Keith from all of us at Aruba Today!! ☐



## Inner fulfillment



Most people wait for their life circumstances to change in order to feel fulfilled, they may even go a lifetime doing so.

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Once you change how you think and emote or feel, you will be able to feel your own joy, peace and a sense of fulfillment.☐

Suresh Mirchumal is a spiritual writer. “Well, you can categorize it like that, although I don’t call myself one. These thoughts come in effortlessly.” His aim is in a way to reach out to whoever gets inspired or has an eye opening event within them that may transcend their current state of consciousness. “Or let’s say current emotional state too. If one in a thousand benefits, that is already great.” Due to the current world state, lots of struggles and stresses, we seem to lose touch with that inner peace that we long for, Suresh explains. “I wish to ease that through these small articles or tidbits.” You will find his tidbits in Aruba Today, like a sunray of the day. If you wish to make use of Suresh his services like meditation or just a talk, please email to: Thedimensionsofsilence@gmail.com.

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# SPORTS



U.S. team player Patrick Reed, left, lines up for a putt on the 7th green during their fourball match at the Royal Melbourne Golf Club in the opening rounds of the President's Cup golf tournament in Melbourne, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

## U.S. TEAM IN FOREIGN TERRITORY \_ TRAILING \_AT PRESIDENTS CUP

By DOUG FERGUSON  
AP Golf Writer

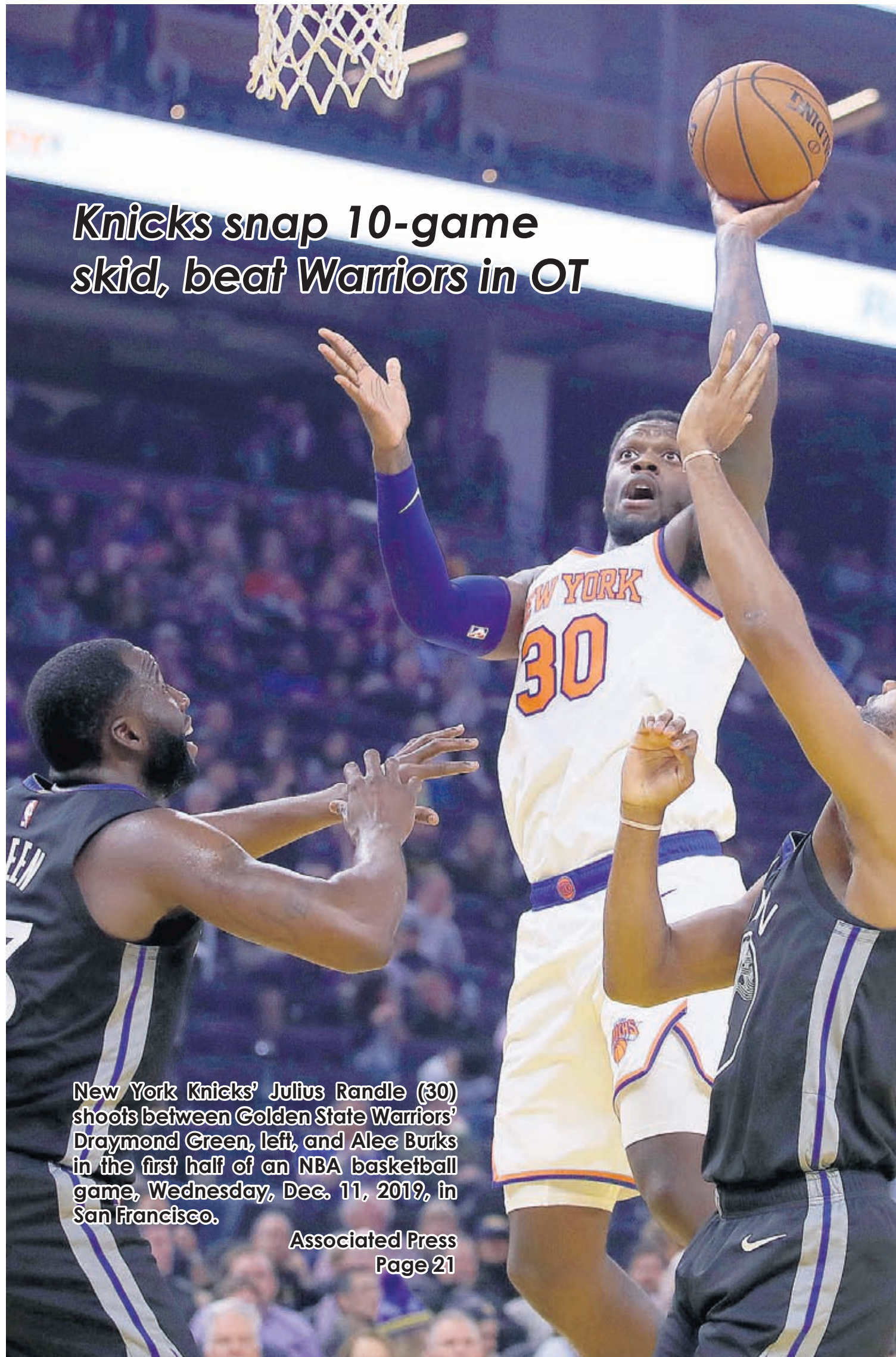
MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Tiger Woods lightly pumped his fist with another birdie. He raised his hands over his head in applause to salute a brilliant play by Justin Thomas that led to another hole won. He thoroughly enjoyed his return to competition in the Presidents Cup.

His match won, Woods took the radio and inserted the ear piece as he resumed his role as U.S. captain.

Ernie Els and his inspired International team won the day, and won it big.

Els got solid performances from Adam Scott and Louis Oosthuizen and remarkable play from his rookies that led to a 4-1 lead after the opening session of fourballs Thursday.

Continued on Page 20



## Knicks snap 10-game skid, beat Warriors in OT

New York Knicks' Julius Randle (30) shoots between Golden State Warriors' Draymond Green, left, and Alec Burks in the first half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in San Francisco.

Associated Press  
Page 21



# MLB, union agree to testing for opioids after Skaggs' death

By RONALD BLUM  
AP Baseball Writer

**SAN DIEGO (AP)** — Major League Baseball will start testing for opioids and cocaine, but only players who do not cooperate with their treatment plans will be subject to discipline. Marijuana will be removed from the list of drugs of abuse and will be treated the same as alcohol as part of changes announced Thursday to the joint drug agreement between MLB and the players' association. In addition, suspensions for marijuana use will be dropped from the minor league drug program. Opioids are classified as a drug of abuse under the joint big league program, which began in late 2002 and until now has limited testing to performance-enhancing substances and banned stimulants.

Talks to add testing for opioids began following the death of Los Angeles Angels pitcher Tyler Skaggs, who was found dead in his hotel room in the Dallas area July 1 before the start of a series against the Texas. A medical examiner's office said the 27-year-old died after choking on his vomit with a toxic mix of alcohol and the painkillers fentanyl and oxycodone in his body. "Players from our side of the equation recognize that there was an opportunity to take a leadership role here in this discussion," union head Tony Clark said. "Players aren't immune to issues that affect all of us, and so the situation this year only heightened that, brought it even closer to home."

Clark said the extent of opioids use among players is "difficult to gauge" and the union concluded there "wasn't necessarily a need to take a census as much as there was taking a leadership role in the conversation."

"I'm just thankful that the players union and MLB were able to address a serious issue in our nation that doesn't have any boundaries and crosses lines into sport and work together for the betterment of our

players," Angels general manager Billy Eppler said. "It shows a lot of human touch on the powers that be and I'm thankful for it." Under the changes, MLB will test for opioids, Fentanyl, cocaine, and synthetic Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Players who test positive will be referred to the treatment board established under the agreement. "It is our collective hope that this agreement will help raise public awareness on the risks and dangers of opioid medications," deputy baseball commissioner Dan Halem said.

Until now, big league players referred to the treatment board who failed to comply with their treatment plan for use or pos-

session of marijuana, hashish or synthetic THC had been subject to fines of up to \$35,000 per violation. Going forward, marijuana-related conduct will be treated the same as alcohol-related issues, and players generally referred to mandatory evaluation and voluntary treatment. Players and team staff will have to attend mandatory educational programs in 2020 and 2021 on the dangers of opioid pain medications and practical approaches to marijuana. Moves by some states to legalize marijuana use factored into the change.

"It was a part of a larger conversation that was reflective of the attitudes changing in many parts of the country," Clark said.



In this June 29, 2019, file photo, Los Angeles Angels starting pitcher Tyler Skaggs throws to the Oakland Athletics during a baseball game in Anaheim, Calif.

Associated Press

Players subject to the minor league testing program, who are not on 40-man rosters and not covered by the union, were suspended until now for a second

or subsequent positive marijuana test. Halem said the big league and minor league programs will treat marijuana use the same way going forward. □

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## Presidents Cup

Continued from Page 18

"I didn't envision 4-1, no," Els said.

It was the first time the International team won the opening session since 2005, which also was the last time it led after any session in an event the Americans have won 10 out of 12 times, including the last seven in a row.

Woods assembled the strongest U.S. team ever for the Presidents based on the world ranking. The first playing captain in 25 years, he inserted himself in the first match and made six birdies, the most of anyone at Royal Melbourne.

When it was over, the U.S. team found itself in foreign territory — trailing for the first time in 14 years.

"We have to earn this cup," Woods said, perhaps a reminder that history means little inside the ropes. "Just because we lost the session doesn't mean the Cup's over.

There's a long way to go, a lot of points available. The guys will regroup, and we'll come out tomorrow ready to go."

That was a message Els preached to his team after a dynamic performance. Scott overcame a snap hook on the opening hole to make five birdies as he and Byeong Hun An — the replacement for Jason Day — won in 17 holes. Hideki Matsuyama holed a 25-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole that carried the Japanese star and C.T. Pan to a 1-up victory over Patrick Reed and Webb Simpson. Oosthuizen and Abraham

Ancer, the Mexican rookie who has received praise all week for his fire and confidence, opened with five straight birdies in a crushing defeat over the American power duo of Dustin Johnson and Gary Woodland. But it was just a start.

"Keep the jets down," Els said. "There's a long way to go. Don't get too excited. This is a strong team, and they're going to come back strong."

Woods was so strong that he decided to play again in Friday foursomes, again paired with Thomas. Woods kept two other teams together — Patrick Cantlay and Xander Schauffele, and Reed and Simpson — even though both lost.

Els is sending out five new partnerships, sticking to a plan that so far is working quite well.

"He had a system going in. We are his soldiers, so we follow his instruction, and that's what we did today," C.T. Pan said. "And it works great."

Woods showed off an exquisite short game, building a 2-up lead after two holes with pitch-and-run shots that set up easy birdies. He chipped in for birdie on the par-5 fifth, and closed out the match with an 8-foot birdie on the par-3 14th and a 5-footer on the next hole, his sixth birdie in the 15 holes he and Thomas needed to beat Marc Leishman and Joaquin Niemann.

Asked what worked well in their first time playing together, Thomas replied, "Tiger was working well." Little else did for the Ameri-



International team captain Ernie Els, right, waves to the crowd after the International team take a 4-1 lead after the opening round of the President's Cup golf tournament at the Royal Melbourne Golf Club in Melbourne, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

cans, but that was more a product of great play by the International team that Els assembled to try to win the Presidents Cup for the first time since 1998, its only victory.

The International team walked off the course with arms around shoulders, a most happy occasion after having lost seven in a row since the tie in South Africa in 2003.

The middle three matches is where the International team seized control in the opening session.

Adam Hadwin and Sungjae Im won the 16th hole with a par, and Schauffele

and Cantlay didn't have good birdie looks over the final two holes to lose.

The biggest of Scott's five birdies was a 12-footer to halve the 14th and protect a 2-up lead that led to victory on the 17th hole over Tony Finau and Bryson DeChambeau, now winless in first four matches in the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup.

The last chance for the Americans to at least get a half-point came in the last match on the course. Reed, who heard his share of needling from the crowd over his rules violation in the sand last week in the Baha-

mas, made a 12-foot birdie putt to square the match on the 16th, only for Matsuyama to deliver his big putt on the next hole. Reed's 30-foot birdie putt on the 18th to halve the match stayed above the hole.

Perhaps typical of the Americans' day was when Johnson, playing for the first time since Aug. 25 because of knee surgery, smashed driver on the 330-yard 11th hole to just inside 4 feet. He missed the eagle putt, Ancer made a 12-foot birdie to keep the 3-up lead and the American team never got any closer. □



# Leonard back in Toronto, leads Clippers past Raptors 112-92

By The Associated Press

**TORONTO (AP)** — Kawhi Leonard scored 23 points in his return to Toronto, Lou Williams had 18 and the Clippers won their third straight game Wednesday, beating the slumping Raptors 112-92.

Maurice Harkless scored 14 points and Paul George had 13 as the Clippers evened their road record at 6-6.

Before the game, Leonard received his championship ring from the 2018-19 season, when he helped Toronto beat Golden State in six games for the franchise's first NBA title.

Clippers guard Patrick Beverley scored 11 points in 19 minutes before leaving in the third quarter because of a concussion.

Beverley collided with Marc Gasol's shoulder as the Raptors center was setting a screen.

Pascal Siakam scored 24 points, Norman Powell had 22 and OG Anunoby 13 as the Raptors lost for the fourth time in five games and dropped their third straight at home.

Toronto set a franchise record with nine straight home victories to begin the season.

## LAKERS 96, MAGIC 87

**ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)** — LeBron James had 25 points, 10 assists and 11 rebounds to help Los Angeles beat Orlando.

Anthony Davis had 16 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers, who have won 13 of 14.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope added 15 points for Los Angeles.

Jonathan Isaac led Orlando with 19 points. Evan Fournier had 18 and Aaron Gordon finished with 14 points and 14 rebounds.

The Lakers weren't crisp offensively at the start of the game but didn't have to be.

Los Angeles limited Orlando to a season-low first quarter shooting of 19% (4 of 21) and turned that into a 26-9 lead.

## PACERS 122, CELTICS 117

**INDIANAPOLIS (AP)** — Malcolm Brogdon scored 29 points and Aaron Holiday



Los Angeles Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard (2) stretches for the ball as Toronto Raptors forward OG Anunoby (3) looks on during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in Toronto.

Associated Press

scored 11 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter to help Indiana rally past Boston. Indiana trailed 94-84 after three quarters but took the lead for good on the first of Holiday's two 3-pointers with 4:16 left.

Kemba Walker scored a season-high 44 points and had seven assists — not enough to extend the Celtics' four-game winning streak.

Indiana snapped a seven-game losing streak in the series — including Boston's first-round playoff sweep last season.

Domantas Sabonis flirted with a triple-double before finishing with 15 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists. Brogdon closed it out by making all six free throws in the final 17 seconds.

## ROCKETS 116, CAVALIERS 110

**CLEVELAND (AP)** — James Harden scored 55 points — 20 in the fourth quarter — and Russell Westbrook added 23 points as Houston withstood an unexpected scare from Cleveland.

The free-falling Cavaliers have lost eight straight and 14 of 15.

Harden matched Kyrie Irving's arena record for points in a game, and his fourth with 50 or more this season bailed out the Rockets, who allowed the

Cavs to score 24 straight points in the second half. Cleveland was still up 108-107 when Harden, who came in leading the NBA in scoring at 38 points per game, dropped a floater in the lane.

After a turnover by Cavs guard Jordan Clarkson, P.J. Tucker hit a 3-pointer from the corner and Clint Capela (13 rebounds) had a dunk following another Cleveland miscue.

The Cavs made three turnovers in the final minute.

## HORNETS 113, NETS 108

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Devonte' Graham scored a career-high 40 points, and Charlotte rallied from a 20-point deficit to beat Brooklyn.

Graham had 27 points in the second half in Charlotte's second straight victory.

Miles Bridges added 14 points.

Spencer Dinwiddie had 24 points and Jarrett Allen added 21 points and 10 rebounds for Brooklyn, who had their three-game winning streak snapped.

## JAZZ 127, TIMBERWOLVES 116

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — Donovan Mitchell had 30 points and six assists, Joe Ingles pitched in a season-high 23 points and Utah dealt Minnesota its sixth straight loss.

Rudy Gobert added 20

points and 16 rebounds for the Jazz, who won for just the third time in nine games by taking over with a 38-24 advantage in the third quarter.

Jeff Teague scored 32 points, making all four of his 3-pointers and all six of his free throws, but the Timberwolves dropped their sixth consecutive home game and fell to 3-8 at Target Center this season.

Andrew Wiggins had 26 points, and Karl-Anthony Towns added 21 points and 11 rebounds for Minnesota.

## BULLS 136, HAWKS 102

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Zach LaVine scored 35 points in three quarters, Lauri Markkanen added 22 and Chicago snapped a three-game losing streak with a victory over road-weary Atlanta.

LaVine, who sat out the final 14 minutes, was 12 for 15 from the field, including 7 for 7 from 3-point range. Wendell Carter Jr. had 11 points and 10 rebounds and rookie Coby White had 19 points.

Trae Young had 15 points and 13 assists, Alex Len scored 17 points and rookie Cam Reddish added 16 for Atlanta, which has dropped two straight and 13 of 15.

## GRIZZLIES 115, SUNS 108

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Dillon

Brooks scored 27 points, Jaren Jackson Jr. added 24 and Memphis earned a win over Phoenix.

Memphis won two games in a row for the first time in nearly a month.

Jackson shot 10 of 18 from the field, including 3 of 7 from 3-point range, and the Grizzlies improved to 6-0 when Brooks scores at least 20 points.

Frank Kaminsky III led the Suns with a season-high 24 points and Ricky Rubio tied a season-high with 22. Kelly Oubre Jr. added 14 points and 13 rebounds.

Leading scorer Devin Booker had an off night with just 15 points on 6-of-17 shooting.

## BUCKS 127, PELICANS 112

**MILWAUKEE (AP)** — Giannis Antetokounmpo sat out but Milwaukee kept on rolling, getting 29 points from Eric Bledsoe in a over the New Orleans that extended the Bucks' winning streak to 16 games.

The Bucks (22-3) tied the second-longest winning streak in franchise history and moved closer to the franchise record of 20, set during the team's 1970-71 championship season.

Antetokounmpo sat out with a right quad tendon injury, missing his first game this season.

Khris Middleton added 24 points for Milwaukee and Ersan Ilyasova had 18 points and nine rebounds. George Hill contributed 13 points off the bench.

New Orleans (6-19) lost its 10th straight game despite a season-high 31 points from J.J. Redick and 25 points and 10 rebounds from Brandon Ingram.

Jrue Holiday had 21 points.

## KINGS 94, THUNDER 93

**SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)** — Bogdan Bogdanovic made a 3-pointer with 13.4 seconds remaining, and Sacramento overcame an 11-point deficit in the fourth quarter to beat Oklahoma City.

Both teams committed turnovers with the game tied in the final minute before Shai Gilgeous-Alexander hit two free throws to put the Thunder up 93-91 with 31.6 seconds left. □



# Caps beat Bruins in showdown between NHL's top two teams

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**  
AP Hockey Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Tom Wilson and Zdeno Chara traded punches, the Washington Capitals and Boston Bruins exchanged scoring chances and goals and a showdown between the NHL's top two teams more than lived up to its billing. T.J. Oshie scored twice in under four minutes and John Carlson got the go-ahead goal in the third to extend Washington's long-standing domination of Boston with a 3-2 victory Wednesday night in a thrilling back-and-forth game between two hockey heavyweights.

"Both teams were flying around, going that extra step to hit someone all the time," Carlson said. "It was a fun game. It was fun to play in. Still not playoffs, but it was a nice way to get into it after the performance we had on Monday."

Each of these teams laid an egg in a loss Monday night, but the Capitals avoided the slide currently befalling the Bruins. Boston has lost four in a row with three of those defeats coming in regulation.

"We've got to keep going," Chara said. "I think it's easy to get frustrated. We realize it was obviously a good hockey team we played tonight. It was a good hockey game. We did a lot of things well. We've just got to continue to perform and keep getting better."



**Washington Capitals right wing T.J. Oshie (77) celebrates his goal during the second period of an NHL hockey game against the Boston Bruins, Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in Washington. This was Oshie's second goal of the night.**

The Capitals have won 16 of their past 17 games against the Bruins. It's a stretch that dates to December 2014 during which Boston won only a close game last Super Bowl Sunday.

"These last couple years has been a grind," said Capitals goaltender Braden Holtby, who made 30 saves. "They have a tough team to play against. Our team usually plays better against teams like that, teams that work hard, play an honest, hard game structurally. It's fun for us to play in those games."

This one was supposed to be more fun than a typical regular-season game.

These teams entered with the most points in the league, Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin trailed only David Pastrnak in the goal-scoring race, the Bruins are coming off another trip to the Stanley Cup Final and Washington won its first title in 2018.

"It's always fun to play (when) the two best teams right now in the league play against each other," Ovechkin said. "You can see how tough the game was. We play hard, they play hard. It's always nice to get two points. We knew it's not going to be easy game because they have a very good team out

there. It was a challenge for us."

After all the talk about this being a mid-December measuring stick for a couple of perennial playoff contenders, the skill level matched the hype.

Pastrnak ripped a perfect shot over Braden Holtby's left shoulder midway through the first for his league-best 26th of the season. It looked like the Bruins had a two-goal lead on a Patrice Bergeron power-play goal, but Capitals coach Todd Reirden challenged for offside and video review showed Jake DeBrusk was into the zone just before the puck.

**Associated Press**

"I kind of knew it, though, as soon as I saw the replay," DeBrusk said. "It was one of those things where it had no effect on the play, but obviously it's not a goal."

Oshie, who had just one goal in his previous 10 games, made the most of nothing but empty ice around him to score off his own rebound on the power play early in the second. Soon after, he turned Bruins defenseman Connor Clifton into a human pylon and beat Jaroslav Halak with a backhander for a highlight-reel goal.

"It felt pretty lucky for the puck to squeak through there," Oshie said. "You just try to put it upstairs with a couple sticks on you so happy it went in."

Kuraly and Carlson traded goals, and these two rivals traded shoves and unpleasanties plenty before the final buzzer. They meet again two days before Christmas.

**CANADIENS 3, SENATORS 2, OT**

**MONTREAL (AP)** — Ben Chiarot scored in overtime and Cayden Primeau made 35 saves for his first NHL victory in Montreal's decision over Ottawa.

Chiarot scored 1:11 into the extra period on a 2-on-1 with Max Domi.

Nick Cousins and Tomas Tatar scored in regulation for the Canadiens. They improved to 15-11-6, winning for the third straight time after losing four of five. □

# Retired goalie Tim Thomas details brain damage from hockey

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**  
AP Hockey Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Former NHL goaltender Tim Thomas said Thursday that his post-concussion syndrome symptoms were so severe that he couldn't make basic decisions and his brain wasn't functioning well enough to even watch hockey.

In his first public appearance since walking away from the game, Thomas said a scan taken after he retired showed that two-thirds of his brain were getting less than 5% blood flow

and the other third was getting less than 50%. The 45-year-old said it took significant time and help to even be able to communicate with former teammates and others. He's still not close to normal.

"I wake up every day and basically I have to reorder everything in my mind for the first couple hours of the day and then make a list and try to make some choices to get some stuff done," Thomas said before being inducted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame.



**Former Boston Bruins goalie Tim Thomas speaks with members of the media before being inducted into the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019, in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

Thomas won the Stanley Cup in 2011 with the Boston Bruins and was named playoff MVP.

He played parts of 10 NHL seasons before retiring in 2014 but said his experiences made him question if it

was all worth it.

"It taught me a value for life and a value for my brain that I've never had before," Thomas said. "And I have appreciation for everything that I never had before. I don't regret anything."

Long considered reclusive, Thomas said he lived in the woods for a couple of years because he couldn't handle human interaction. He got a chance to talk to some old teammates at a game Wednesday nights between the Bruins and Washington Capitals. □





In this Nov. 10, 2019, file photo, LSU quarterback Joe Burrow (9) is carried by LSU nose tackle Tyler Shelvin (72) after an NCAA football game against Alabama, in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Associated Press

## AP Player of the Year: QB Joe Burrow, first winner from LSU

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**  
AP College Football Writer

What figures to be an award-winning week for LSU quarterback Joe Burrow is underway.

Burrow was named The Associated Press college football player of the year on Thursday in a landslide vote, making him the first LSU player to win the the 21-year-old award.

Burrow, who has led the top-ranked Tigers to an unbeaten season and their first College Football Playoff appearance, received 51 of 54 first-place votes from AP Top 25 poll voters and a total of 159 points.

Ohio State defensive end Chase Young was second with three first-place votes and 69 points while Buckeyes quarterback Justin Fields was third with 43 points. Burrow, Young,

Fields and Oklahoma quarterback Jalen Hurts, who finished fourth with 33 points, are the finalists for the Heisman Trophy to be handed out Saturday in New York.

Burrow is the overwhelming Heisman favorite after passing for 4,715 yards and a Southeastern Conference record 48 touchdowns. The senior transfer from Ohio State is on pace to set a major college record, completing 77.9% of his passes.

Burrow is up for two more awards Thursday night at the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. He is a finalist for the Davey O'Brien National Quarterback of the Year Award, along with Fields and Hurts. He is also a finalist for the Maxwell Player of the Year, along with Young and Hurts. □

## Christian Pulisic U.S. Soccer male player of year for 2nd time

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Christian Pulisic was voted the U.S. Soccer Federation male player of the year, at 21 becoming the youngest to earn the honor for the second time.

Pulisic had five goals and three assists for the U.S. this year. The midfielder and occasional forward received 38% of votes in totals announced Thursday, followed by forward Jordan Morris (35%) and Weston McKennie (13%).

He also plays for Chelsea in the Premier League, a transfer secured this year. Voters include national team coaches, players with national team appearances in 2018, the USSF board of directors and athlete council members, coaches in Major League Soccer, the United Soccer League, National Women's Soccer League, men's and women's national team coaches, select media and former players and administrators. □



Assistant Attorney General Brian Benczkowski, center, in charge of the criminal division at the Dept. of Justice, U.S. Attorney Robert Duncan, of the Eastern District of Kentucky, left, and FBI Special Agent George Piro, right, in charge of the FBI's Miami office, appears at a news conference to announce charges against ten former National Football League (NFL) players who are accused of defrauding an NFL health care program, at the Justice Department in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

## 10 ex-NFL players charged with defrauding healthcare program

By **MICHAEL BALSAMO**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Ten former NFL players were charged in a multimillion-dollar scheme to defraud the league's health care benefit program by submitting false claims for medical equipment, including devices used on horses, the Justice Department said Thursday. The players were charged in two separate indictments filed in federal court in Kentucky, accusing them of conspiracy, wire fraud and health-care fraud. Prosecutors allege they submitted nearly \$4 million in phony claims, leading to payouts of about \$3.4 million between June 2017 and December 2018.

Those charged include five former players on the Washington Redskins, including Clinton Portis and Carlos Rogers.

Prosecutors allege the players targeted the Gene Upshaw NFL Player Health Reimbursement Account Plan, which was established as part of a collective bargaining agreement in 2006. It provides tax-free reimbursement of out-of-pocket medical care expenses

that were not covered by insurance and that were incurred by former players, their spouses and dependents.

"As outlined in the indictments, a group of former players brazenly defrauded the plan by seeking reimbursements for expensive medical equipment that they never purchased," said Assistant Attorney General Brian Benczkowski, who leads the Justice Department's criminal division.

The players claimed to have purchased hyperbaric oxygen chambers, ultrasound machines and electromagnetic therapy devices that were designed to be used on horses, he said.

Prosecutors say the group's alleged ringleaders, Robert McCune and Cornell Buckhalter — who they allege broke off to create his own similar ring — would recruit former players by offering to submit fake claims to the health care plan. The ringleaders would then demand thousands of dollars in kickbacks for each fake claim, prosecutors allege.

The suspects are accused of fabricating letters from

health care providers about using the medical equipment, fabricating prescriptions that were purportedly signed by healthcare providers and creating fake invoices from medical equipment companies in an effort to prove the equipment was purchased, according to court documents. In reality, they had never purchased or received the medical equipment, prosecutors said.

Investigators believe the defendants had forged the prescriptions and authorization letters and uncovered no evidence that any doctors were complicit in the scheme, Benczkowski said.

After the phony claims were submitted, the former players would receive reimbursement checks and pay a kickback to the ringleaders and recruiters, the indictments charge.

Prosecutors moved to bring charges, in part because the scheme put the health care plan's tax-exempt status at risk, which could've forced other former players using the plan legitimately to pay more, Benczkowski said. □



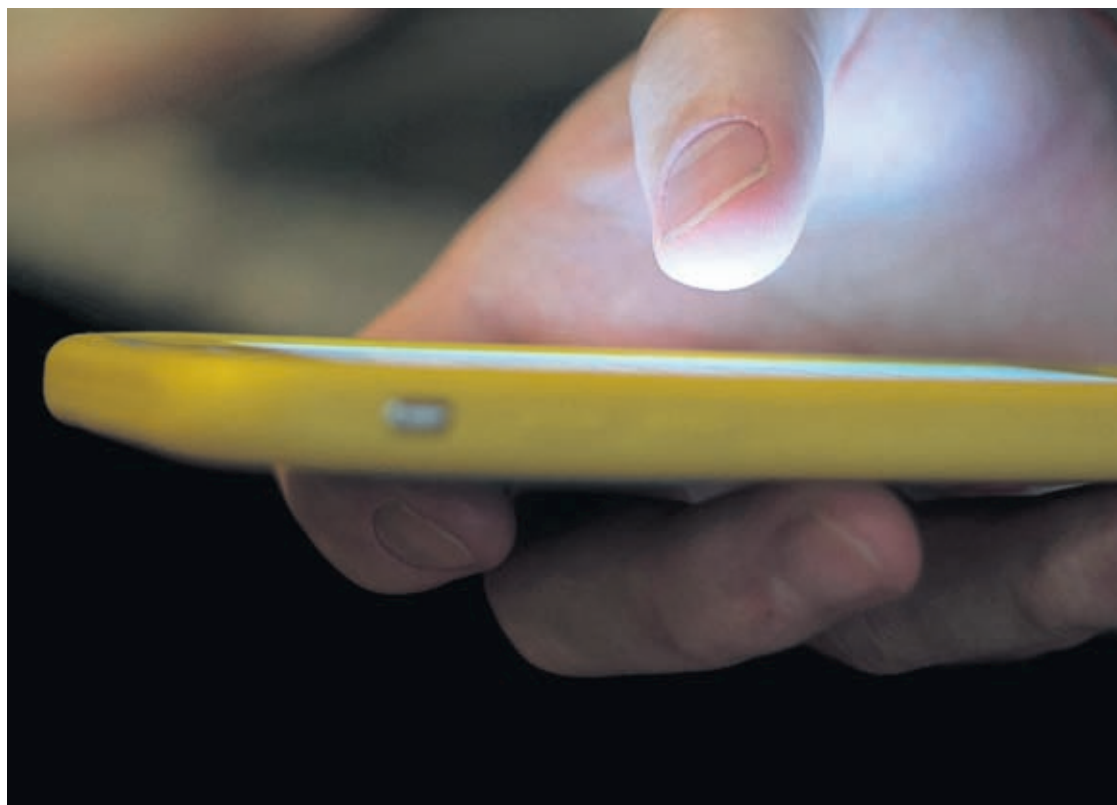
# FCC votes to set up 3-digit suicide hotline number like 911

By **MAE ANDERSON**  
AP Technology Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Federal regulators are setting up a new three-digit number to reach a suicide prevention hotline in order to make it easier to seek help and reduce the stigma associated with mental health. Once it's implemented, people will just need to dial 988 to seek help, similar to calling 911 for emergencies or 311 for city services. Currently, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline uses a 10-digit number, 800-273-TALK (8255). Callers are routed to one of 163 crisis centers, where counselors answered 2.2 million calls last year.

A law last year required the Federal Communications Commission to study assigning a three-digit number for suicide prevention. The FCC said in a report that there is overwhelming support for a three-digit number because it would be easier for distressed people to get help.

Thursday's vote starts the months-long process to make that happen. The next step is a comment pe-



In this Aug. 11, 2019, file photo, a man uses a cell phone in New Orleans.

Associated Press

riod before the FCC moves to an order.

The government's action comes as suicide rates have increased across the U.S. over the past two decades, and dramatically so by more than 30% in half of U.S. states, according to the Centers for Dis-

ease Control and Prevention. There were 45,000 deaths in 2016. The report noted that from 1999 to 2016, suicide increased in every state except Nevada. It also noted that suicide rates are higher with at-risk populations, including veterans and the LG-

BTQ community.

"More than 20 veterans die by suicide every day and more than half a million LGBTQ youth will attempt suicide this year alone," FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said. "A shorter, simpler suicide hotline number could be a game-changer."

The new, shorter number would likely lead to more calls, which in turn would mean more expenses for crisis centers already struggling to keep up. If the number of calls to the hotline doubled, centers would need an extra \$50 million a year to handle the increase, the FCC said, citing the federal agency that funds the hotline, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The FCC determined that it would be better to have a new number that's only for the hotline, rather than one that's currently used for other purposes, such as 911.

Advocates say that having a dedicated number, along with a message that mental health is of equivalent importance as medical emergencies, could help reduce the stigma of calling the number.

"The three-digit number is really going to be a breakthrough in terms of reaching people in a crisis," said Dwight Holton, CEO of Lines for Life, a suicide prevention nonprofit. □

# Facebook rebuffs U.S. AG over access to encrypted messages

By **MATT O'BRIEN**

Facebook is rebuffing efforts by U.S. Attorney General William Barr to give authorities a way to read encrypted messages.

The heads of Facebook-owned WhatsApp and Messenger services told Barr and his U.K. and Australian counterparts that Facebook is moving forward with plans to enable end-to-end encryption on all of its messaging services.

End-to-end encryption locks up messages so that not even Facebook can read their contents.

WhatsApp already uses end-to-end encryption. Facebook plans to extend that protection to Messenger and Instagram Direct. Barr and other officials had asked the company in October to hold off. In a letter to Facebook CEO



In this April 11, 2018, photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg listens to a question as he testifies before a House Energy and Commerce hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

Mark Zuckerberg, they insisted that precluding access by law enforcement could hinder efforts to prevent or investigate crimes. The letter repeatedly emphasized the dangers of child sexual exploitation to

justify their stance.

Barr reiterated his concerns in a speech Tuesday, calling the encryption fight "one of our highest priorities" and describing "an increasing number of horror stories about how people

are dying, or being molested or whatever, but we cannot get in."

Law enforcement has long sought a way to read encrypted messages that's analogous to wiretaps for phone calls.

Security experts, however, say that giving police such access makes messaging insecure for everyone by creating vulnerabilities that others can exploit.

In Facebook's response Monday to Barr and other authorities, Will Cathcart, head of WhatsApp, and Stan Chudnovsky, head of Messenger, said creating such a "backdoor" for law enforcement "would be a gift to criminals, hackers and repressive regimes, creating a way for them to enter our systems and leaving every person on our platforms more vulnerable to real life harm."

Facebook has said that people have the right to private conversations online and that companies are already able to respond to government agencies when they receive valid legal requests. Facebook's letter emphasized the many tools the company has built to try to detect criminal and other problematic activities using signals from unencrypted information. Barr said at a Wall Street Journal event on Tuesday that there are benefits to encryption, such as to secure communications with a bank.

But he said the growth of consumer apps with end-to-end encryption, like WhatsApp and Signal, have aided "terrorist organizations, drug cartels, child molesting rings and kiddie porn type rings." □



## Fed leaves low rates alone and foresees no moves in 2020

By **CHRISTOPHER RUGABER**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Federal Reserve is leaving its benchmark interest rate alone and signaling that it expects to keep low rates unchanged through next year.

The Fed's decision follows three rate cuts earlier this year. It reflects its view that the U.S. economy has so far withstood the U.S.-China trade war and a global slump and remains generally healthy.

Its benchmark rate — which influences many consumer and business loans — will remain in a low range of 1.5% to 1.75%. The Fed may prefer to leave rates alone through 2020, an election year. But many analysts note that the economy faces risks from trade conflicts, a global slowdown and a potentially disruptive Brexit and say the Fed may feel compelled to cut rates at least once next year.

Persistently low inflation with very low unemploy-



In this Nov. 25, 2019, file photo Federal Reserve Board Chair Jerome Powell addresses a round table discussion during a visit to Silver Lane Elementary School, in East Hartford, Conn.

Associated Press

ment has led many Fed officials to conclude that rates can remain lower for much longer than they thought without spurring higher prices.

Low rates help consum-

ers and businesses afford to borrow and spend. Still, savers have struggled to find returns outside the stock market that can keep them ahead of inflation.

Chairman Jerome Powell has said that this year's Fed rate cuts have helped lower mortgage rates and spurred growth in home purchases. Auto sales have also remained healthy as

more Americans have borrowed to buy cars.

After having raised its benchmark short-term rate four times in 2018, the Fed reversed course this year and cut rates three times to a range of 1.5% to 1.75%. Powell has portrayed those cuts as mainly "insurance" against a slowdown resulting from weak global growth and President Donald Trump's prolonged trade war with China.

Monthly job growth reached its highest point this year in November, and the unemployment rate matched a 50-year low of 3.5%. Measures of consumer confidence also remain at historically high levels.

Powell and other Fed policymakers have made clear that they are no longer worried that a healthy job market will necessarily fuel excessive inflation. Instead, they would like to see inflation reach their 2% target level after running below it for most of the past seven years. □

## US stocks rise in early trading on trade deal hopes

By **DAMIAN J. TROISE**  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Stocks moved higher in early trading on Wall Street Thursday as investors jumped on a statement from President Donald Trump that the U.S. is getting close to a "big deal" with China.

Wall Street has been watching closely for any developments in the ongoing trade negotiations all week as the nations head for another escalation. A new round of U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods will kick in on Sunday and raise the prices of popular products including laptops and cellphones. Investors are hoping that enough progress is made to prompt a delay from Washington.

Banks helped lead the gains as bond prices fell, sending yields higher. Bank of America rose 1.5%. Higher yields allow banks to charge more lucrative interest rates on mortgages and other loans. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 1.84% from

1.79% late Wednesday.

Technology companies also made strong gains. Broadcom rose 2.5%.

Real estate companies and utilities lagged the market in another sign that investors were shifting money away from safe-play investments.

**KEEPING SCORE:** The S&P 500 index rose 0.6% as of 10 a.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average 173 points, or 0.6%, to 28,084. The Nasdaq rose 0.5%. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks rose 0.6%.

**TAKEOFF:** Delta Air Lines rose 3.8% after the most profitable U.S. carrier gave investors a surprisingly good profit and revenue forecast for 2020. The company said it expects sustained demand for air travel and stable prices for jet fuel.

**SPREADING LUV:** Southwest Airlines 1.8% after it reached a deal with Boeing for compensation over the grounding of the 737 Max aircraft. It will also share about \$125 million with its workers.



In this Dec. 5, 2019, file photo, trader Gregory Rowe, left, and specialist Michael Pistillo work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press




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**CASH REGISTERS RINGING?** Friday's retail sales report from the Commerce Department will offer investors a solid measure of the economy's health in a week dominated by uncertainties over trade. Economists expect retail sales to rise in November. □



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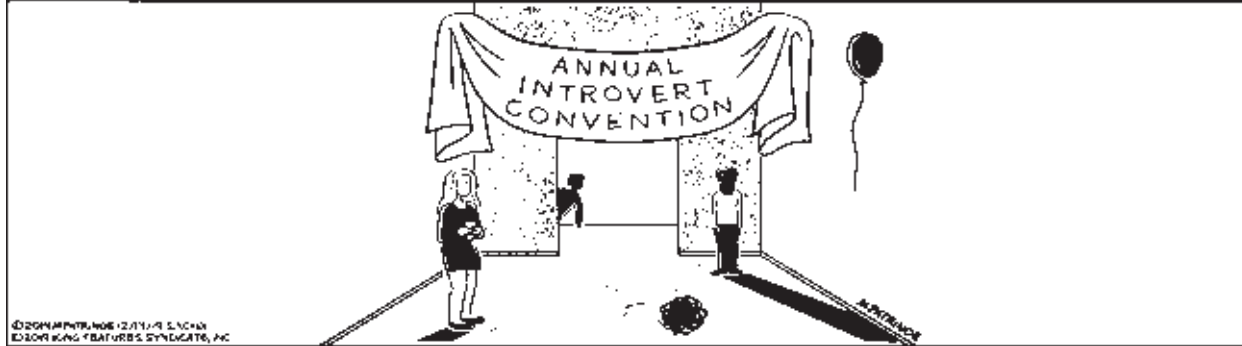
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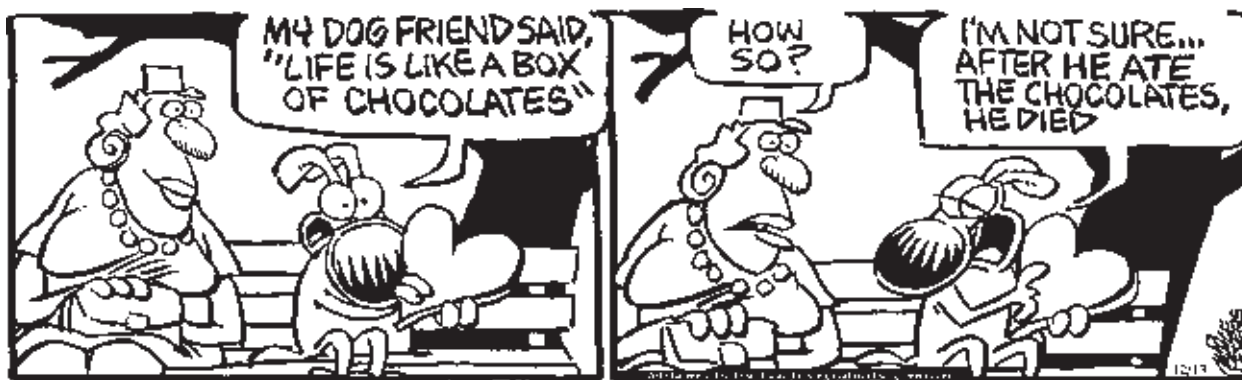
**6 Chix**



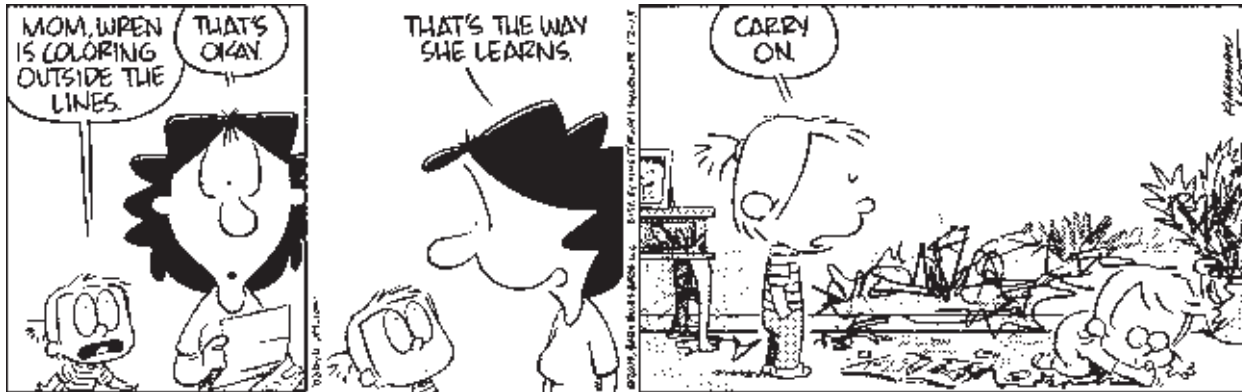
**Blondie**



**Mother Goose & Grimm**



**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

2		5		9
5	6		7	4
6		3		3
3	5	7	4	8
1				9
4	1	9	6	5
6		8		3

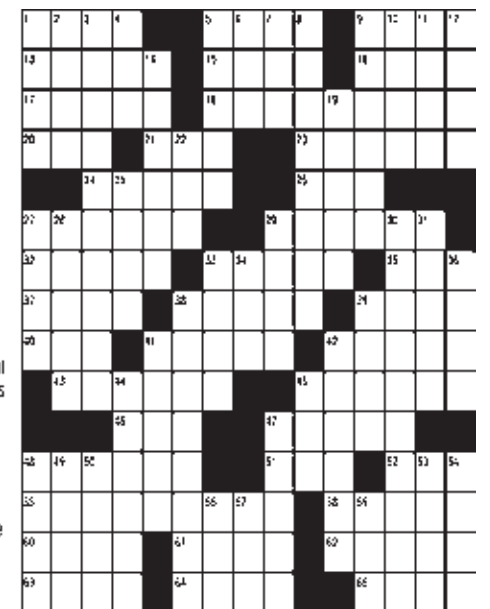
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

8	6	9	1	7	2	3	5	4
3	4	2	6	5	8	7	1	9
1	7	5	3	9	4	6	2	8
6	9	8	4	1	5	2	7	3
4	1	3	7	2	6	9	8	5
5	2	7	9	8	3	4	6	1
2	3	4	8	6	1	5	9	7
9	5	1	2	4	7	8	3	6
7	8	6	5	3	9	1	4	2

- ACROSS**
- 1 Now in a noscila
  - 5 Thick ooze used as a mast
  - 9 Little patches have big
  - 13 Zodiac sign
  - 15 Showed up
  - 16 Outer
  - 17 Enforce
  - 18 Vr Onassis
  - 20 person each
  - 21 Heavy weight
  - 23 Self-confident
  - 24 Get rid of a tenant
  - 25 McMahon & Ames
  - 27 Turn aside: defect
  - 29 Little lips
  - 32 Upper-class
  - 33 Re gous zea
  - 35 Letter to Aristotle
  - 37 unler slant
  - 38 foot parts
  - 39 Panorama
  - 40 It for
  - 41 Pedes
  - 42 Early bedtime
  - 43 Formal argument
  - 45 Pranks
  - 46 In a imired by
  - 47 Cry to the uplight
  - 48 Touch for one
  - 51 of bee from
  - 52 Suffix for in'dor
  - 55 Sicilian volcano
  - 58 Poe or Berger
  - 60 Sleep ponder something overnight
  - 61 Ramble
  - 62 Vitary stockade
  - 63 Wider or blackman
  - 64 Droops
  - 65 WWII Normandy invasion date



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 12/13/19

**Thursday's Puzzle Solved**

TIC	SCAMP	ELMS
ALLS	LOVER	NOAH
GLOW	OPINE	TOGO
STEPPED	UP	OMIT
DIED	ARM	
SPLITS	BAREBACK	
CLASS	FACED	SUN
RUTH	TESTS	TIRE
ATE	WANTS	LADLE
PORPOISE	MOSEYS	
LOL	TOOT	
PUMA	STRUTTING	
OPEN	PIANO	EDAM
ROME	INTER	RAGE
KNOT	NEEDS	KAN

- DOWN**
- 1 Pig's lunch
  - 2 Become exhausted
  - 3 Shorten
  - 4 Numerical prefix
  - 5 Insulticent
  - 6 Hoie average
  - 7 Franco franc
  - 8 Admires greatly
  - 9 Pompousness
  - 10 Carney's namesakes
  - 11 Inlular
  - 12 Drove too fast
  - 14 Togs
  - 19 12-13-19
  - 22 Autumn month
  - 25 Docs for boxers
  - 27 Money owed
  - 28 Epic about the Trojan War
  - 29 Beholds
  - 30 Born with a silver spoon: in one's mouth
  - 31 Actor Char'le
  - 33 Danish native
  - 34 Fee'ing poorly
  - 36 Has possession of
  - 58 Colonists
  - 59 Cal meat

- 41 Ste. Marie
- 42 Playground equipment
- 44 Ein yor Charlotte
- 45 Beta Kappa
- 47 Stuffs
- 48 Air pollution
- 49 Scoop roder
- 50 Destroy
- 53 Long sale
- 54 Low-card
- 56 'Ode
- 57 Henpeck
- 59 Why the chicken cross the road?



# Feds agree to review grizzly protections in contiguous US

By **MATTHEW BROWN**  
Associated Press

**BILLINGS, Mont. (AP)** — Federal officials will review whether enough is being done to protect grizzly bears in the contiguous U.S. states after environmentalists sued the government to try to restore the fearsome animals to more areas, according to a court settlement approved Monday. The review must be completed by March 31, 2021, U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen ordered.

Grizzly bears have been protected as a threatened species in the U.S. — except in Alaska — since 1975, allowing a slow recovery in a handful of areas. An estimated 1,900 of the animals live in portions of Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Washington state.

Tens of thousands of grizzlies once populated western North America before hunting, trapping and habitat loss wiped out most by the early 1900s.

Federal wildlife officials said in 2011 that additional areas should be considered for grizzly bear recovery, but that work has never been completed.

In a lawsuit filed in June, the Center for Biological Diversity sought to force officials to consider restoring grizzlies to parts of California, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and Oregon.

"There are a lot of places where grizzly bears used to live where we believe they could currently live," said Andrea Santarsiere, an attorney for the group.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to the grizzly status review that could lay the groundwork for new restoration plans, though that's not guaranteed. Agency officials did not immediately respond to telephone and email requests seeking comment.

One area previously mentioned by federal officials as having potential for grizzlies is southwestern Colorado's San Juan mountain range.



This April 29, 2019 file photo provided by the United States Geological Survey shows a grizzly bear and a cub along the Gibbon River in Yellowstone National Park, Wyo.

Associated Press

Advocates of returning bears and other predators to the state have grown more vocal in recent years. They are now trying to get an initiative on the 2020 ballot to have the state reintroduce gray wolves west of the Continental Divide. Ranchers, hunters and other interests are campaigning against the proposal.

A review of the states in the continental U.S. would look at potential habitat for grizzlies, people who live in those areas and how far they are from existing grizzly populations, said Chris Servheen, former coordinator of the government's grizzly bear recovery program. But Servheen said in his opinion that the review would distract from efforts already underway to bolster struggling populations

of grizzlies in areas like the North Cascades of Washington state and the Bitterroot region of Montana and Idaho. "It just doesn't make sense to look for new places for bears when we don't have enough money to deal with the existing areas we have," Servheen said. The agreement between the government and environmentalists does not fully resolve the June lawsuit, which also seeks an update to the government's recovery plan for grizzlies.

Representatives of the ranching industry have intervened in the case to oppose a new recovery plan. They say it would hinder the government's efforts to lift protections for grizzlies in and around Yellowstone National Park. □

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# California calls pot smoke, THC a risk to moms-to-be

By **MICHAEL R. BLOOD**  
Associated Press

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — A California panel voted Wednesday to declare marijuana smoke and the drug's high-producing chemical — THC — a risk to pregnant women and their developing fetuses and require warning labels for products legally sold in the nation's largest pot market.

The decision by the little-known Developmental and Reproductive Toxicant Identification Committee will not take effect for a year, and it remains to be seen what impact it will have on the state's emerging marijuana industry.

The vote came after hours of discussion by a nine-member panel of scientists who delved into the reliability and accuracy of dense research studies involving people and animals, including mice, rats and fish.

Surveys have indicated that a rising number of mothers-to-be have turned to marijuana products for relief from morning sickness and headaches, though it's effectiveness has not been backed by science. Since 2009, California has listed marijuana smoke



In this Aug. 24, 2018 file photo Keira Sumimoto plays with her daughter, in Irvine, Calif.

Associated Press

as being known to cause cancer, similar to tobacco smoke.

The vote adds THC and pot smoke to the list of chemicals the state has judged to be known to cause birth defects or other developmental problems and must carry warning labels.

Cannabis industry officials say too little sound research is available to support such a move and warn that it could make

marijuana companies a target for lawsuits with unverified claims of injuries from pot use during pregnancy.

Ellen Komp, deputy director of the legal pot advocacy group California NORML, told the panel that the studies only examined women who smoked marijuana, not those who used vapes, topical lotions or other methods. Taken together, the studies "pro-

duced conflicting results," she said.

Some studies didn't make clear how frequently a mother used cannabis during pregnancy or what products were being used. Others didn't account for instances when mothers were using marijuana and tobacco and whether that could skew the results. In other cases, studies relied on self-reporting by new mothers, putting the reli-

ability of the information in doubt. The panel spent several hours debating the studies, and in the end, it found the weight of the evidence was sufficient.

The review was carried out under the umbrella of the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act, better known as Proposition 65. It requires warning labels for chemicals judged as dangerous and allows residents, advocacy groups and attorneys to sue on behalf of the state and collect a portion of civil penalties for failure to provide warnings.

The 1986 law has been credited with weeding out cancer-causing chemicals from products but also faulted for setting the stage for legal shakedowns.

Lawyers looking for a quick buck will say "give us \$10,000 or we are going to take you into a long court case," said Los Angeles dispensary owner Jerred Killoh, who heads the United Cannabis Business Association, an industry group.

The California Cannabis Industry Association echoed that fear, noting that pot's standing as an illegal drug at the federal level has choked off research by government agencies. □

## Officials want \$100M for reef restoration in Florida Keys

**KEY LARGO, Fla. (AP)** — Federal officials have announced plans to raise \$100 million to fund projects to restore seven significant coral reef sites in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

"Mission: Iconic Reefs" calls for restoring nearly 70 acres (28 hectares) of

the Florida Reef Tract, one of the largest strategies ever proposed for coral restoration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Monday.

NOAA officials said the organization will work with partners to secure public and private funds.

"We have identified some iconic reefs here in the Keys that we want to help restore," sanctuary superintendent Sarah Fangman said. "These reefs have been suffering from a number of threats for years as have reefs around the world." NOAA officials have received inquiries from government leaders wanting to know what can be done to save the reefs, Fangman said.

Since the 1970s, tropical cyclones, heat-induced coral bleaching, cold snaps and disease events have reduced coral coverage in the Keys. Outbreaks of stony coral tissue loss



In this June 8, 2015 file photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau, volunteers with the Coral Restoration Foundation swim to a coral reef planting site with staghorn coral clippings in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary off Key Largo, Fla.

Associated Press

disease, first noticed off Miami in 2014, have spread as far as Cozumel, the Caribbean region, and have baffled marine biologists. The disease has not affected branching species such as elkhorn and stag-

horn coral. Restoration efforts involving growing and transplanting corals have proven successful in the Keys, motivating plans for the large-scale restoration effort within the sanctuary. □

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## Reese Witherspoon honored at Women in Entertainment gala

By **JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.**  
**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Reese Witherspoon remembered when she met with several film production studios in 2011 to ask them how many movies were being developed for women. The studios' responses nearly floored her.

"Of all the major seven studios, the answer was one," Witherspoon said after she received the prestigious Sherry Lansing Leadership Award at The Hollywood Reporter's Women in Entertainment breakfast gala Wednesday in Los Angeles. The Oscar and Emmy-winning actress was handed the award by her friend actress Kerry Washington for excelling in film and her philanthropic efforts.

Witherspoon said she was grateful to receive the award named after Lansing, the former Paramount Pictures CEO who was the first woman to head a Hollywood studio. While she called Lansing a "trailblazer," the actress hearkened back to her meeting with studios that felt "grim."

"One movie was being made with a female lead out of 140 movies," she continued. "As I was told by a studio head at the



**Ava Phillippe, from left, Reese Witherspoon, Deacon Phillippe and Jim Toth arrive at The Hollywood Reporter's Women in Entertainment Breakfast Gala on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, in Los Angeles.**  
**Associated Press**

time, 'Well, we already have one female star this year. We can't make two.' Can you guess which year this was? 2011. Not 1911. ... 2011."

Witherspoon said the moment helped empower her to start her own production company, Hello Sunshine, which has produced Oscar-nominated films "Gone Girl," "Wild,"

and the HBO drama series "Big Little Lies" with an all-female leading cast.

The actress, who starred in films including "Legally Blonde" and "Sweet Home Alabama," told the packed room of about 600 people, mostly women, that "this is our time."

The star-studded event included Charlize Theron, John Legend and Mindy

Kaling. It also had about 40 young women who are taking part in THR's Women in Entertainment mentorship program, established a decade ago.

"A lot of people can recognize a problem, look at it and complain about it," said Witherspoon, who is also a member of the Time's Up movement, an initiative for anti-harass-

ment and gender equality. "But not everybody is going to do something about it. Leaders are really doers. Even though you don't think of yourself as a leader, or you're hesitant or you're hypnotized by words saying 'You can't.' Too bad. Do it anyway."

Around \$1.5 million in university scholarships were presented to high school seniors from under-served communities in south and east Los Angeles. All of the seniors have taken part in the program.

Often shedding tears on-stage, Theron said the gala "fed my soul."

Actress Olivia Wilde, a guest editor of THR's Women in Entertainment issue that was released Wednesday, said women should explore their feminine strength. Ronan Farrow received the Equity in Entertainment award for his journalistic work against gender-based discrimination. Political activist Stacey Abrams spoke during her keynote speech about storytelling holding an extraordinary power. She said she's witnessed moments when women and others who "look like me are often footnotes not chapters in stories." □

## Ryan Reynolds says he related to Peloton actress' plight

By **JOHN CARUCCI**  
**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Ryan Reynolds says he relates to the social media criticism heaped on the Peloton ad actress. In fact, that feeling led him to hire her for a commercial promoting his gin company. Reynolds spoke Tuesday about the uproar while promoting his new action flick, the Michael Bay-directed "6 Underground." In the Peloton commercial, Monica Ruiz portrays a wife who receives an exercise bike as a Christmas present, and chronicles her yearlong journey to get in shape. The commercial ends with the wife thanking her husband for the gift. After the



**Ryan Reynolds attends the premiere of Netflix's "6 Underground" at The Shed at Hudson Yards on Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, in New York.**  
**Associated Press**

spot aired, the character was mocked for several reasons: Some noted she was already thin, others mocked her for having a "nervous" expression, and others were angry her husband gave her an exercise gift, as if she needed to lose weight.

Reynolds thought the viral negativity was unfair, and said it's "a situation that I've been in many times before" as an actor.

"You put it out there, and it doesn't quite work, and you feel a little alienated and stuff. So, I had tremendous empathy for her in that moment," Reynolds said at the premiere of his new action flick, "6 Underground." □



# 'Benson,' 'Star Trek' actor René Auberjonois has died at 79

By **ANDREW DALTON**  
Associated Press

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — René Auberjonois, a prolific actor best known for his roles on the television shows "Benson" and "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" and his part in the 1970 film "M.A.S.H." playing Father Mulcahy, has died. He was 79. The actor died Sunday at his home in Los Angeles of metastatic lung cancer, his

son Remy-Luc Auberjonois told The Associated Press. René Auberjonois worked constantly as a character actor in several golden ages, from the dynamic theater of the 1960s to the cinema renaissance of the 1970s to the prime period of network television in the 1980s and 1990s — and each generation knew him for something different. For film fans of the 1970s,



This Nov. 9, 2013, file photo shows Rene Auberjonois at the International Myeloma Foundation 7th Annual Comedy Celebration in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

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**JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL**  
DWAYNE JOHNSON | JACK BLACK  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-THU	6:05   7:30   8:50
	FRI	6:05   7:30   8:50   10:15
	SAT	2:00   3:20   4:45   6:05   7:30   8:50   10:15
	SUN	2:00   3:20   4:45   6:05   7:30   8:50

**CXC**

PBP	MON-THU	5:50   8:30
	FRI	5:50   8:30   11:10
	SAT	3:10   5:50   8:30   11:10
	SUN	3:10   5:50   8:30

**VIP** MON-FRI 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20  
SAT-SUN 1:20 | 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20

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**BLACK CHRISTMAS**  
IMOGEN FOOTS | CARY ELWES  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH	MON-FRI	6:25   8:40
	SAT-SUN	1:55   4:10   6:25   8:40

**PBP** MON-FRI 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35  
SAT-SUN 1:00 | 3:05 | 5:15 | 7:25 | 9:35

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**DARK WATERS**  
MARK RUFFALO | ANNE HATHAWAY  
PH MON-FRI 6:45  
SAT-SUN 1:50 | 6:45

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**MARDAANI 2**  
RANI MUKERJI | RAJESH SHARMA  
PBP MON-SUN 7:05 | 9:25

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**Knives Out**  
DANIEL CRAIG | CHRIS EVANS  
3 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES PG-13

PBP	MON-FRI	3:45   6:30   9:15
	SAT-SUN	1:00   3:45   6:30   9:15

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**FROZEN II**  
Disney  
2 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES PG

PH	MON-FRI	6:00   8:35
	SAT-SUN	3:30   6:00   8:35

**PBP** MON-FRI 3:50 | 4:45 | 6:15 | 8:40  
SAT-SUN 1:25 | 2:25 | 3:50 | 4:45 | 6:15 | 8:40

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**21 BRIDGES**  
CHADWICK BOSEMAN | J.K. SIMMONS  
PH MON-FRI 9:30  
SAT-SUN 4:30 | 9:30

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**QUE LEONES**  
OZUNA | CLARISSA MOLINA  
SPANISH

PH	MON-THU	6:10   8:30
	FRI	6:10   8:30   10:50
	SAT	3:50   6:10   8:30   10:50
	SUN	3:50   6:10   8:30

**PBP** MON-THU 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20  
FRI 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35  
SAT 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35  
SUN 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20

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he was Father John Mulcahy, the military chaplain who played straight man to the doctors' antics in "M.A.S.H." It was his first significant film role and the first of several for director Robert Altman.

For sitcom watchers of the 1980s, he was Clayton Runnymede Endicott III, the hopelessly highbrow chief of staff at a governor's mansion on "Benson," the ABC series whose title character was a butler played by Robert Guillaume.

And for sci-fi fans of the 1990s and convention-goers ever since, he was Odo, the shape-shifting Klingon and head of space-station security on "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine." "I am all of those characters, and I love that," Auberjonois said in a 2011 interview with the "Star Trek" website. "I also run into people, and they think I'm their cousin or their dry cleaner. I love that, too."

Fellow stars from "Star Trek" shows praised the actor on Twitter.

William Shatner said that "to sum up his life in a tweet is nearly impossible. To Judith, Tessa & Remy I send you my love & strength. I will keep you in my thoughts and remember a wonderful friendship

with René."

George Takei tweeted: "'Star Trek fans knew him as Odo from Deep Space Nine. We knew him as René. He was a wonderful, caring, and intelligent man. He shall be missed. When I look out to the stars, I shall think of you, friend.'" Auberjonois was born in New York in 1940, the son of Fernand Auberjonois, Swiss-born foreign correspondent for U.S. newspapers, and the grandson of a Swiss post-impressionist painter also named René Auberjonois.

The younger René Auberjonois was raised in New York, Paris, and London, and for a time lived with his family in an artists' colony in Rockland County, New York, whose residents included the actors John Houseman, Helen Hayes and Burgess Meredith.

After graduating from college at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie Mellon, Auberjonois hopped around the country joining theater companies, eventually landing three roles on Broadway in 1968, including playing the Fool in a long-running version of King Lear.

The following year he would play Sebastian Baye

opposite Katharine Hepburn in "Coco," a play on the life of designer Coco Chanel that would earn him a Tony for best actor in a leading role in a musical. He would later see Tony nominations for 1973's "The Good Doctor," 1984's "Big River," and 1989's "City of Angels."

In 1970, Auberjonois began his run with Altman, playing Mulcahy in "M.A.S.H."

In his most famous exchange from the movie, Sally Kellerman's Margaret Houlihan wonders how such a degenerate doctor as Donald Sutherland's Hawkeye Pierce could reach a position of responsibility in the U.S. Army.

A bible-reading Auberjonois responds, deadpan: "He was drafted."

"I actually made that line up when we were rehearsing the scene," Auberjonois said on the podcast "The Gist" in 2016. "And it became a kind of an iconic line for the whole film."

The same year he played an off-the-wall ornithologist in Altman's "Brewster McCLOUD," played a saloonkeeper alongside Warren Beatty in the director's western "McCabe & Mrs. Miller" in 1971 and appeared in Altman's "Imagery" in 1972. □



## Richmond gets a new soaring statue, this one with dreadlocks

By SARAH RANKIN

Associated Press

**RICHMOND, Va. (AP)** — A massive bronze sculpture of a young black man with dreadlocks astride a muscular horse was permanently installed Tuesday in Virginia's capital city, not far from one of the country's most prominent displays of Confederate monuments.

Thousands of people crowded the lawn of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts as "Rumors of War" was unveiled. The piece, the first public sculpture by prominent artist Kehinde Wiley and Wiley's largest work to date, was previously on display in Times Square.

"Rumors of War" was Wiley's response to the Confederate monuments that pepper the U.S. and the South in particular. The new monument arrived amid an ongoing debate across the country about what to do with Confederate imagery and as Richmond grapples with how to tell its history as both the capital of the Confederacy and a former hub of the international slave trade.

"It's a story about America 2.0," the artist said, adding he was overwhelmed by



The statue titled *Rumors of War* by artist Kehinde Wiley gets fully unveiled after the tarp covering the statue got stuck for a while at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Va., Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019.

the size of the crowd.

Wiley is known for his regal portraits of black Americans, including one of former President Barack Obama that's displayed at the National Portrait Gallery. He said he was inspired to create "Rumors of War" after seeing a massive equestrian monument honoring Confederate Gen. J.E.B. Stuart during a visit to Richmond in 2016.

The Stuart monument is one of five giant Confederate statues along Monument Avenue, a prestigious residential street and National Historic Landmark district.

Both the Stuart statue and "Rumors of War" feature horses in virtually the same pose, with one front leg lifted.

Both riders are turned to the side. But instead of

Civil War-era garb, Wiley's equestrian is dressed in streetwear: a hoodie, ripped jeans and sneakers, with dreadlocks gathered atop his head.

Virginia's governor hailed the twist on history as he addressed the crowd Tuesday.

"People in Richmond will recognize its shape and its form, but it depicts a person who looks different

from every other statue in this city — and there are a lot of them," Gov. Ralph Northam said. "And so today we say welcome to a progressive and inclusive Virginia."

Wiley said the statue wasn't a tribute to any one individual.

Instead, he said, it is about "about black men and their place in this society. And in a much broader way, a society that can say yes to black men and their place in this society."

Mounted on a large stone pedestal,

Wiley's sculpture is just blocks from Monument Avenue. It is prominently displayed along the city's historic Arthur Ashe Boulevard, a thoroughfare renamed in honor of the black tennis great earlier this year. It sits next to the headquarters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The silver, shimmery drape that covered the statue got caught in the figure's hair during Tuesday's unveiling. Hundreds of people stood for about 35 minutes in cold, drizzling rain until a firefighter clambered up a ladder and finally pulled the covering off, to a roar from the crowd. □

Associated Press

## Kim Kardashian West sues doctor over 'Vampire Facial'

By JAY REEVES

Associated Press

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)**

— Reality TV star and businesswoman Kim Kardashian West is suing an Alabama doctor over claims he wrongly used her image to promote a medical procedure called a "Vampire Facial."

West filed suit Tuesday in Los Angeles against Dr. Charles Runels of coastal Fairhope,

Alabama. The suit claims Runels misused West's image in promotional materials after she posted a photo of herself on social media showing the results of a "Vampire Facial."

West, a reality TV star and successful businesswoman who has a number of

beauty and lifestyle enterprises and millions of followers on social media, asked a federal judge to bar Runels from using her name or photo and to make him and any other doctors who benefited pay her profits. Runels, 59, said in a telephone interview Wednesday that West wrongly used his trademarked name for a medical procedure to promote herself. He called the lawsuit "disappointing."

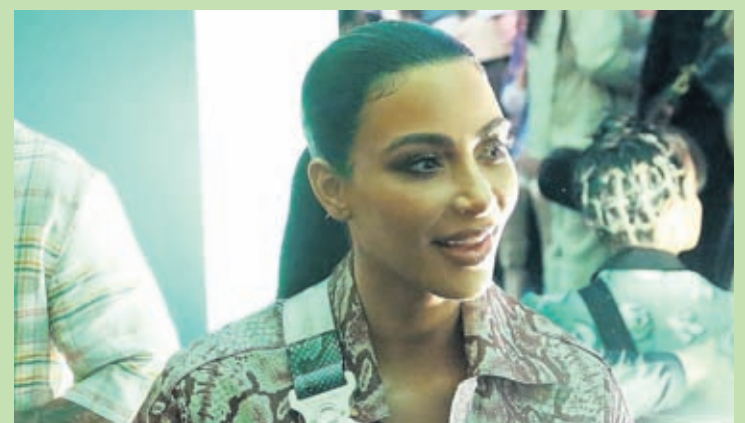
"We're trying to do good medicine. The last thing we want to do is spend millions of dollars arguing with a celebrity," he said.

The cosmetic procedure involves drawing a patient's blood, spinning it in a centrifuge and then in-

jecting small amounts under the skin using multiple, small needles, Runels' website says, and blood also is applied topically on the skin.

Runels, who said he developed the procedure and got a trademark for the "Vampire" name, said about 2,300 physicians in 50 countries are licensed to perform the procedure. West underwent the procedure from an associated doctor in Miami in 2013 before posting a photo of herself online with blood on her face, he said.

The lawsuit, which seeks an unspecified amount of money, contends Runels wrongly used her photo and name to promote his business. Runels said he



In this Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2019, photo, actress Kim Kardashian West waits for the Christian Dior pre-fall 2020 men's fashion show to start during Miami Art week, in Miami.

Associated Press

didn't ask the celebrity for the social media post, which he said she used to draw more attention to herself.

"I've already taken all the stuff off my website, but I'm

not going to let her call me a thief. First she works to let everyone in the world know she had a Vampire Facial and now she doesn't want anyone to talk about it," Runels said. □



# Ukrainian city remembers Jews on Holocaust anniversary

By VANESSA GERA  
RANDY HERSCHAFT  
YEVHENIY KRAVS  
Associated Press

**LVIV, Ukraine (AP)** — The Ukrainian city of Lviv, once a major center of Jewish life in Eastern Europe, commemorated on Sunday the 75th anniversary of the annihilation of the city's Jewish population by Nazi Germany and honored those working today to preserve what they can of that vanished world.

City authorities presented the honored recipients with 75 glass keys — replicas of a metal key that once belonged to a Jewish synagogue and which an American artist found at a street market in Lviv. The anniversary events, which included a prayer concert at the ruins of former synagogues, come amid other attempts to revive suppressed memories of the Jews who once were an integral part of the region. "God forbid our city once suffered such a misfortune," Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadoviy said at the ceremony. "Today we cannot even imagine for a moment the pain, humiliation and grief that thousands of Lviv's people suffered in the last century." Iryna Matsevko, deputy director of the Center for Urban History of East Central Europe and an organizer of the anniversary events in Lviv, said it was the first time the western Ukrainian city has acknowledged the historical preservation efforts



**Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadoviy presents glass copy of an old metal synagogue key to Yanina Hescheles, at ceremony commemorating 75th anniversary of the annihilation of the city's Jewish population by Nazi Germany in Lviv, Ukraine.**

in such an extensive way. Matsevko said consciousness is growing in Ukrainian society of the need to remember the Jews who were annihilated by Nazi forces, in some cases with the participation of local people. Initiatives have included introducing Jewish history courses at universities, new research by young Ukrainian scholars and grassroots efforts by volunteers, such as the recovering Jewish gravestones that were used to pave roads and returning them to cemeteries. "This is part of the process of reviving the memory

of the Jewish heritage. Of course, this process is slow. I want it to be quicker, but for the last 10 years we have seen how the Jewish heritage is returning to people's consciousness and a lot of activities are taking place," Matsevko said. "It is very important that people are being acknowledged for their work in Jewish heritage." Before World War II, Lviv and the surrounding area belonged to Poland. Then called Lwow, it was the third largest Jewish community in prewar Poland after Warsaw and Lodz, with most working as merchants, manufacturers or artisans. Before World War I, Lviv and the surrounding area were part of the eastern Galicia region of the Austro-Hungarian empire and the city was called by its German name, Lemberg. In June 1941, Germany attacked the Soviet Union, its former ally. When the German forces entered the city, they and their Ukrainian collaborators massacred Jews in the city and countryside. While occupying the area, Germans murdered Jews in the ghetto, the Belzec death camp and a forced labor camp, Janowska, with the final annihilation completed by June 1943.

Of a population of about 150,000 Jews, only an esti-

ed irregulars who fought against the Soviet Army in World War II. To what extent this has led to greater anti-Semitism is a matter of dispute. Some of the people trying to sustain the history of Jewish life in western Ukraine think the amount of anti-Semitism is exaggerated as part of a Russian propaganda effort. Among those honored was Marla Raucher Osborn, an American who heads Rohatyn Jewish Heritage. The group's projects include restoring a Jewish cemetery in nearby Rohatyn. Osborn said she was honored to be acknowledged along with local activists "working quietly in local communities, recovering Jewish memory with little or no knowledge of their projects outside of those communities, especially among the distant Jewish diaspora."

Associated Press



**In this undated photo, U.S. citizen Marla Raucher Osborn, a Rohatyn Jewish heritage project leader, shows volunteers the gravestones at an old Jewish cemetery in Rohatyn close to Lviv, Ukraine.**

Associated Press



**In this undated photo provided by artist Rachel Stevens an old synagogue key discovered by Stevens at a market in Lviv, Ukraine, and a glass replica that she made modeled on it are photographed.**

Associated Press

mated 1 percent survived. In the postwar years, with Ukraine part of the Soviet Union, the memories of the murdered Jews began to vanish. Historian Omer Bartov has called the area a "land of memory and oblivion, coexistence and erasure, high hopes and dashed illusions." The remembrance work is taking place as Ukraine finds itself mired in crisis and conflict following Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and a continuing Russia-backed insurgency in the east. Nationalism has been on the rise, and some Ukrainians laud the Nazi-affiliated

The glass keys were the work of New Mexico-based artist Rachel Stevens, who found the rusted synagogue key on which they were based in February while seeking remnants of Jewish culture in eastern Galicia as part of a research project. Stevens used glass for the replicas because in Jewish tradition the material "represents the fragility of life." Creating them "became a tangible way for me to express my grief about the past and my hope for the future," she said. "The idea for this artwork seems almost mystically delivered to me," Stevens said. □